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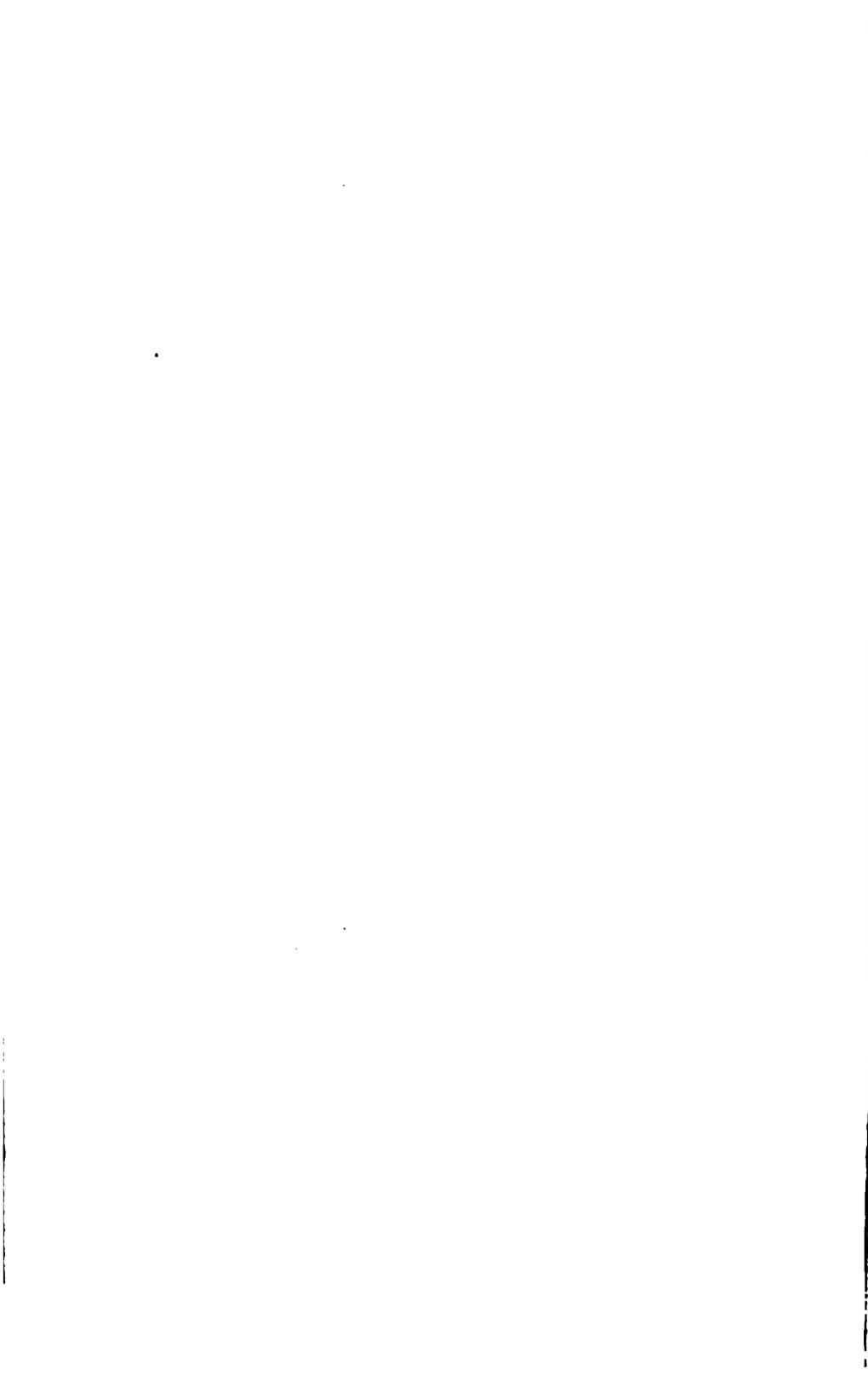


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THE SOUL OF EUROPE

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THE SOUL OF EUROPE

A CHARACTER-STUDY OF THE MILITANT NATIONS

BY

JOSEPH McCABE

AUTHOR OF

"GOETHE," "TALLEYRAND," "THE EMPRESSES OF ROME" ETC.

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THE SOUL OF EUROPE

INTRODUCTION

THE SOUL OF A PEOPLE

IN the month of July of the year 1914 the sun smiled on the annual brotherhood of nations at play. The true master of passion is play, and year by year this growing international amity seemed to be softening the old asperities, the memories of defeat on the field of battle or the field of diplomacy. Men and women laughed as they sped beneath the grim forts which soil the Alpine frontier of France and Italy, or as they gazed on the secretive mounds which rose, like giant mushrooms, beyond the circles of Liège and Metz and Antwerp, or as they passed through the wide-open gates of Germany. Britons reflected the smiles of brother Teutons, as they sat on the benches of the beer-gardens by the Spree. Austrians, sipping iced coffee on the Boulevard des Capucines, saluted the happy genius of France. Frenchmen protested that they breathed their native air in the Ring at Vienna. Grave, observant Germans muttered guttural admiration before the Hôtel de Ville at Louvain

or amidst the dim glories of Westminster Abbey. Clouds, it is true, gathered thickly over the mountains of a little southern land, and in secluded chambers our political meteorologists tapped their barometers with nervous finger. The genial riot of the summer holiday ran on. And suddenly the peal to arms rang out, and the honoured guests fled under a hail of insults, and the gates of the nations were slammed. Slav was Slav, it seemed, and Teuton was Teuton, and Latin was Latin once more : and they who unhappily remained, in cages of barbed wire, in alien lands saw anger or hate flame forth against them as if the battles of a thousand years had surged into living memory, and all the love-making of that summer's day had been a make-believe.

Are there souls of nations that can love and hate, live and die, as the souls of men do ? Did this ghastly outbreak mean that undying race-antagonisms had blazed out once more and scorched the thin mask of brotherhood ? The man of science had begun to tell us that these racial affinities and antagonisms were, largely, an unhappy fiction. He scoffed at "Aryans," and smiled indulgently when we talked of Saxon and Celt, of Slav and Latin and Teuton. He was beginning to study what he called "the psychology of a crowd," even "the psychology of a people"; he allowed that in each large family of men which gathered round a national flag there might be distinctive impulses,

attitudes, and ideals—the things which we call, in a word, the soul of a people. But he frowned when one spoke, in the familiar way, of racial affinities and racial hostilities.

There was, assuredly, a time when masses of tall, blue-eyed, fresh-faced men came southward from the forests of northern Europe, where æons of isolated life among the summer oaks and the snow-laden pines of winter had put a peculiar stamp on their minds and ideals, no less than on their bodies. There was a time when a shorter, darker, pallid-faced race from the sunny shores of the Mediterranean, a race enriched and uplifted in mind by contact with the older civilisations, marched northward under its eagles, and gazed at the fur-clad barbarians with as vivid a feeling of human contrast as that with which we now confront the Arab or the Maori. Between them, moreover, a third race, not yet fully understood, variously known as the " Alpine " or the " Celtic " race, seems to have penetrated from the east ; and from the east also came, time after time, yellowish, slit-eyed races with ideals and impulses entirely unlike those of the three European races. The opinion is not yet wholly extinct among scientific men that several human species were independently developed.

But what mighty confluences of the human streams there have been in Europe during the last two thousand years ! For four hundred years the northern and southern races battled, and the central

race mingled with both on their battle-grounds. At length the Mediterranean men, or the Latins—already adulterated out of recognition by contingents from the north and east—yielded and retired, and the flood of northerners poured over them and blended with them. What a mixture of blood there must have been when Goths and Vandals, breeding as they went, slowly descended as far as the tips of Spain and Italy, and even passed in mighty armies along the north of Africa to Carthage ! How much “ Latin ” blood was left in France when Goths and Vandals had eaten their way through it, and Franks and Normans had settled on it ? Is the Breton, with his Celtic tongue and round Celtic face, the blood-brother of the peasant of the Ardennes and the artisan of Lille and the innkeeper of Carcassone ? Who will say what are the several proportions of Celt and Saxon and Danish and Latin blood in the veins of England ? or of Celt, Teuton, and Slav blood in the veins of Germany ? or of Roman, German, Slav, and Asiatic blood in the veins of Austria ?

On the other hand we have been somewhat hasty in assenting to pretty literary descriptions of races whose blood was comparatively pure. We still speak of the Greek’s genius for culture and the sterner Roman’s genius for administration. We forget that Athens—almost, by the way, the one Greek city with a high culture—did very well in its own administration and had no occasion to

develop whatever faculty it possessed of imperial organisation, because it had no opportunity to found an empire ; whereas Rome, unchecked in its growth and unstimulated in its life by rival cities, was compelled by its very expansion to cultivate the art of governing. A little time ago we admired the ancient Hebrew's "genius for morality," and now we find the same ideals stamped on brick or written on papyrus among the ruins of Babylon and Thebes. Some speak still of the modern Hebrew's "genius for finance," overlooking the fact that for many centuries Europe allowed him no other field for the exercise of his keen intelligence. We say picturesque things about the remote, inaccessible, mystic, imaginative soul of the Oriental ; and we are well aware that within a few years Japan absorbed our western ideals as a sponge absorbs water, and that the Chinaman is immeasurably less mystic and imaginative than the Irish peasant. We brood over the unalterable soul of the Hindu, and we frown when we observe that a western education almost invariably alters it. We rhapsodise on the weary soul of ten-thousand-year-old Egypt, and we dig up statues from which we recognise that the fellah is to-day as he was six thousand years ago : perhaps ready to enter the great stage of history once more.

Yet, in spite of all this misapplication of poetry to racial description, there is a verifiable truth in the belief that nations have distinctive characters,

or " souls." Photographers have a trick of superimposing on one plate the portraits of a dozen musicians, or a dozen members of a family, and one often recognises the faint outline of a common type amidst the blurred confusion of detail. So the mind often retains a fairly clear common image when numbers of portraits, either of body or character, have been registered on it. Not only do scientific works confidently offer us " typical " portraits of various races, but there is good reason for the substantial agreement of the world in recognising the portrait of Uncle Sam or John Bull, of the stolid German and the mercurial Frenchman, and the impetuous yet grave and ceremonious Spaniard.

You realise the truth, and its limitations, in making a journey from Holland to the south of France. I wandered about Amsterdam one festive day, when country folk and town folk swarmed in the streets, and it was possible to see a common type, of body and character, under all the infinite variations. In the north of Belgium, where I have lived intimately among the Flemings, you find the same type with certain modifications : just as you find a different dialect of a once common tongue. There is, of course, no psychological frontier where the white posts mark the beginning of Belgian soil ; but the Fleming, as you go southward, begins to be conscious of a difference and to be hostile to the Dutch. He is more impulsive, more boister-

ously hospitable, more bluntly critical, than the Dutch : less even-tempered, less restrained in manners and speech, less methodical. He is more apt to offend and more apt to win sudden admiration. At Brussels you find the Fleming contrasted with the South Belgian, the Walloon. He is still more impulsive, warmer of blood, nimbler of wit, quicker of movement, nearer to refinement of nature, more receptive of new ideas : he is hostile to the Fleming, and claims to be very superior to him. He blends the French and the Netherlandish character. The heavier features gradually disappear as you pass through the great industrial towns of northern France : and it is a commonplace of Parisian writers that if you will prolong your journey as far as—let us say—Gascony, you will meet yet another type of character.

You notice the same gradual passage from one fairly definite type to another in travelling from Germany to the south of Italy. In north Germany itself you have variety enough : the Wend peasant of the Spree Forest or the Polish peasant of Posen or the Teutonic peasant of the northern granaries, the comparatively jovial official of cosmopolitan Berlin and the dourer type of the northern cities. We shall see this later. But it is one of the most persistent and soundest observations of travellers in Germany that the northern character is, from influences which I will discuss later, more grave and austere and laborious than the southern.

About Geneva the south German character begins to fall under the distinctive influences of Switzerland. Along the valleys of Switzerland, the trenches dug by giant glaciers of long ago, streams of Germans, French, and Italians have made their way from their respective frontiers, and mingled with the old Alpine population, or streaked the little land with veins of different nationalities. But in the towns where they meet and mix, and even on the chalet-covered slopes and in the nestling villages, a peculiar common stamp has been set on their original characters by the features of their new home : by the massive grandeur of its mountains—whose inspiration was so vividly felt and described by Goethe—and by the long, tranquil possession of freedom and self-government. Under these influences the German character assumes again the gravity of the north, but it is a gravity which pays spontaneous homage to the majesty of nature instead of reflecting a dark cloud of despotic authority. In Ticino you encounter the north Italian character : the strenuous, alert, aspiring, rebellious, inflammable, yet generally disciplined, type of the artisans of Milan and Turin and (in the main) Genoa. I saw Genoa, one Sunday evening, on the brink of civil war. Guns were trained on the square, and ten thousand regulars sullenly awaited the attack. Then there came a ripple over the wires from the workers' headquarters, and the tens of thousands of Genoese

who at six in the evening had been ready to die for a principle were at 6.30 cracking jokes with the weary soldiers. At Rome you find a subtler, more elusive character : a character moulded by traditions which go back two thousand five hundred years, but modified by the conversion of Rome into the hierarchic centre of the world, enfeebled by long periods of bad government, and complicated by a thousand years of cosmopolitan life. Further south are the elemental, spontaneous children of the earth and the sun.

You may to-day study this process of the making of the soul of a people in the United States or Australia, but there is no need to linger further. Few will require a patient demonstration of the fact that the Irishman differs in definite ways from the Englishman or the Scotchman, or that the Texan has not the same character as the citizen of Massachusetts. Sometimes, when you survey the stream of faces in the Strand or Broadway or Collins Street or the Boulevard St. Michel, you almost despair of seeing a common type in so bewildering a variety : you listen to the talk of men in a café at Brussels or a beer-house at Basle or at the little tables on the Piazza Colonna, and the shades of character seem innumerable. Each national "type" seems to be found in each other nation. Yet there is something of a national type. There is a soul of a nation, and it differs from the souls of other nations.

This is no more surprising than that there are distinct languages and diverse physical types. Whatever mind or soul is, it reflects the changes and diversities of the body; and if the steaming forests of Africa beget the negro, the broad dry plains, with extremes of climate, of Asia beget the yellow man, and the searching cold of the north begets the Scandinavian, this deep influence on muscle and nerve is bound to affect the mind. Into a general discussion of this, however, I do not propose to enter. Serious scientific inquiry into the matter is still in its infancy, and has as yet furnished only the general principles of social psychology, which do not concern me, or a few special studies of particular peoples such as I propose to make. In fact, contrary to a common belief, we have not yet settled the important question how far heredity is concerned in the making of a people. Two influences only need be noted here.

We may at least recognise that "inbreeding"—that is to say, confining the choice of breeders within a group of more or less similar individuals—has had an important share in establishing and preserving race-characters. Hence the remarkable persistence of the Hebrew type in a hundred different environments: hence the greater distinctness—away from frontiers—of Slav features, or of Irish or Welsh features: hence the comparative fixity of types in our rural districts and small towns,

which have a limited range of intermarriage, in contrast to the diversity of large towns. Distinct types of body and character, which may have been created during some far-back period of isolation, are thus preserved by marriage within the group, and this preserving force of heredity is so tenacious that in a cosmopolitan city like Alexandria or Constantinople or New York a practised observer will recognise races at sight. But with the increase of the race, with the spread of great empires and their international armies over scores of subject peoples, and with the increasing facility of movement in modern times, the old hereditary streams have crossed and recrossed over the greater part of the globe. Basques may linger in the Pyrenees and Wends in the Spree Wald, but, as a rule, the higher a civilisation is, the less it can hope, and the less it should seek, to call itself by the names of its ancient fathers. In some of our chapters this consideration will prove of importance.

But far greater is the influence, direct or indirect, of what we call, in the broadest sense of the word, environment. I have already observed how, in the case of Switzerland, where few live out of sight of the snow-clad mountains, the physical surroundings and the political conditions combine to mould the character of a population which has largely been drawn from different sources. In Holland and Belgium quite different surroundings have made their mark on the national character.

In many parts of Ireland the soft and melancholy hills and the enervating moisture have united with a long tradition of distress ; and the common religion, the burning memory of misfortune, and the coherence against a more robust aggressor, have helped to make and preserve a type of character. The several elements of France have been knit together in the enthusiasm of three revolutions. Germany has succeeded in bringing about an extraordinary unity of its radically diverse peoples by persuading or compelling them to adopt a common aspiration. We shall trace this influence throughout. Historical accidents—the issue of war, for instance—will make one people stern, laborious, aspiring, and aggressive, and another people pacific, jovial, humane. Geographical accident—compare, for instance, the Devon men of Dartmoor, of the more fertile lands, and of the coast—may divide a group into still further types.

This direct observation of character and connection of it with the physical and moral environment may prove more useful to us than the distribution of peoples into the ancient stocks which no longer represent sharply distinct types, and therefore I dwell little on the features of skull and hair, and colour of eyes, which interest men of science and seduce less careful writers. On these latter tests, we shall find, recent German writers of great influence have concluded that Christ, Dante, and Joan of Arc owed their several excellences to an

admixture of Germanic blood. In point of fact, the German of to-day has no title whatever to speak of a racial homogeneity and make it a basis for his overweening ambition. Even the Slav, more or less isolated in the Balkans or in the heart of Russia, has had notable historical adulterations. And to speak of "Latin" peoples is one of the worst instances of taking the accident of language for a deep symptom of race. The character of France has almost no relation to the ancient Italian people who imposed their tongue on that part of Europe; while the cry of blood-brotherhood on the lips of their neighbours is very largely based on a superficial thesis of the schools which has been pressed into the service of politicians. A million accidents, spread over more than a thousand years, have led at length to the grouping of the inhabitants of Europe round certain national flags, and we shall find that in some cases the most fiery patriotism—the kind of patriotism which fancies that it springs from an immemorial tradition—is the outcome of quite recent influences, and has been artificially generated.

If we would understand aright the gigantic quarrel which has convulsed Europe, and appreciate the chances of a return to lasting tranquillity, we must look closely into this old idea of blood-brotherhood as the basis of national character. Most assuredly there has been some influence of racial affinity in this mustering of seven nations

in two mighty antagonistic forces, but it is less important than is commonly believed, and, in cases where it plainly exists, its appeal has been superseded by cold and interested calculations. In proportion as race-affinity has been slighted by scholars, it has become dear to diplomatists and statesmen. If we would truly understand the souls of the contending nations, we must attend to a hundred other things : the interests of commerce and the accidents of history, the material of the national tradition and the sequels of an advancing technical science, the personality of rulers and the domestic life and political development of their subjects. In this sense I propose to study as closely and as fully as possible the character and mood and outlook of each of the nations involved in the great war : to depict them in their homes, before passion distorted their features, as well as in the field, and to trace the causes of their tragic differences.

I begin with Germany because it is of paramount importance, both for the understanding of the war and in order to make some reasonable conjecture as to what will follow, to study the mood and temper of that nation. The conflicting nations have now published the diplomatic correspondence which preceded the war. This correspondence is remarkable for an agreement and for an omission. The agreement, which no ingenuity on the part of Austria and Germany has succeeded in enfeebling, is to the effect that England, France, and Italy made

devoted efforts to avert war, and Russia met their appeals satisfactorily. Austria and Germany have obviously published only a selection of their documents—the German “White Paper” is self-convicted of suppressing a material telegram from England—yet these suffice of themselves to belie the charge that England desired or provoked the war, and they strip the last shred of decency from the fierce attacks made on England by German savants and from the national cultivation of hatred.

Such is the outstanding affirmation of this diplomatic correspondence : the omission is not less instructive. The messages which passed between the Foreign Offices of London, Paris, and Petrograd, or went from those capitals to Vienna and Berlin, have been published with apparent fulness : the closest scrutiny does not detect any gap or inconsistency. But the correspondence between Berlin and Vienna has not been published. The German Chancellor affirmed throughout that he was cordially co-operating in the interest of peace and was urging Austria to be conciliatory. Where are his dispatches ? Where are the Austrian replies ? We need not wait until the historian of some future date discovers them in the archives ; and when, after noting the consistent peace-work of France and England and Russia, and the dark suppression of the Austro-German correspondence, we read the illuminating earlier dispatches of M. Jules Cambon from Berlin, when we study the develop-

ment of aggressive Imperialism in German schools and literature, when we learn from Italian statesmen that Austria meditated war on Serbia in 1913, when we observe that Germany broke with its ultimatum upon the hopeful negotiations of Austria and Russia, and when we perceive that one nation only was in a state of extraordinary preparedness for war, we cannot hesitate to give a verdict. Germany desired and provoked the war.

This deliberate provocation of so mighty a calamity, and the appalling conduct of Germany during the course of the war, make the study of its psychology one of equal interest and importance. We had heard from time to time of conduct on the part of German officers which all civilians, and most military men, regard as brutal ; but very few people who knew Germany were prepared to hear the supreme representative of that nation, to the applause of his colleagues in the Reichstag, declare that they would hack their way through moral and international law to the realisation of their aim : or to find almost the entire German people applaud the ruthless transgression of the rules of civilised warfare : or to behold the spectacle, as childish as it is indecent, of a national cultivation of the barbaric passion of hatred.

At the commencement of the war one of our statesmen, who was convinced that he knew Germany, resigned his office because he would not believe her guilty. Presently we began to distin-

guish between the Emperor, with his military and commercial supporters, and the mass of the people. To-day we regretfully yield to the impeachment of an entire nation. The leading representatives of each section of it—of its scholars, its churches, and its workers—have approved the initial outrage, and hardly one of them has raised a protest against the general applause of successive outrages and against the increasing frenzy. There is an ancient, respectable maxim, “No one becomes utterly base in a day”; and on that principle some are concluding that the soul of Germany is inherently malignant, cruel, and selfish. It is not so. We have the books of several generations of English travellers, and none has ever approached so hard a verdict on the German people. Let us patiently study that people as it was before the hot blasts of the war-passion seared and scorched it, and see if we can understand. Then we have to study what qualities brought Austria and Turkey to join in the great adventure: then to understand the blaze of heroism which has illumined Belgium, the vigour of what some writers had called frivolous and decadent France, the sturdy endurance of Servia, and the unexpected might and brilliance of Russia. If we know these peoples in peace, we shall understand them better in war.

CHAPTER I

THE GERMAN SOUL

Inflated German idea of the national soul and its world-mission—The truth about the early and the medieval Germans—German admissions of recent degeneration—Kultur and Civilisation—The character of Berlin—The contrast of the Prussian and the south German—Evil effect of prosperity and over-population—The Imperialist tradition—The opportunity of the Kaiser—His aims and character—How the nation was prepared for aggressive war—How it was reconciled to outrages.

IN no other country in the world is there so confident a claim to possess a national soul, or so deep a pride in its virtues, as in Germany. The French poet may at times conceive an “âme de la France” which, in successive revolutions, burst the bonds of old Europe ; and it is not unknown for an English writer to speak, in some exalted hour, of “the spirit of England.” But “die Deutsche Seele”—the German soul—is a phrase which, in Germany, grave men of science and learned historians and practical statesmen use almost as fluently as poets or preachers ; and to their countless thousands of readers the phrase seems to represent one of the most evident and most transcendent of realities. Indeed, in a not inconsiderable body of recent German literature this “German soul” is described as the key to the destinies of man. Not only poets like Emmanuel Geibel, in his day the

greatest lyrical poet of Germany, but scholars of such distinction as Friedrich Dahlmann and Heinrich von Treitschke have impressed this on their fellows ; and in the mouths of the shriller prophets of recent years it has become the strangest doctrine that national pride ever conceived.

According to this doctrine, which rests on a broad foundation of scientific and historical treatises and is the faith of millions, all the previous history of man has been but a preparation for the final revelation and triumph of the German soul, which are to illumine the twentieth century. For two thousand years this German soul has been stirring in the slow progress of mankind : breaking through the inert mass, here and there, in men of genius whom we now discover to have had the inspiration of Germanic blood. We have foregleams of the triumph of the German soul in the moral altitude of Christ, in the greatness of Charlemagne, in the heroism of Joan of Arc, in the superb visions of the Italian artists of the Renaissance, as well as in the crusade of the Reformers. At last it shines more steadily in the dynasty of the Hohenzollerns and in the warriors and statesmen who gather round the Prussian throne : it awakens in the mass of the people after the formation of the Empire : it throbs with sympathy and aspiration in the Germanic peoples beyond the frontier and beyond the seas : it will expand until all branches of the race are united and the whole of mankind is irradi-

ated and uplifted by its virtues. The "German" stock of the "Aryan" race has proved the "noblest," the predestined, branch of the human family. -

I will show on a later page that this is not merely the innocent folly of a few visionaries, but for the moment it will be better to consider the belief in its more sober phases. That there is a "German soul," and that it possesses very distinctive and very superior virtues, is the common teaching of German writers and the general conviction of the German people. Eighteen hundred years ago the Roman historian Tacitus put before his nation a most graceful account of "the character of the Germans." These rude barbarians of the north, he said in effect to his countrymen, put to shame your vices and your enervation by their manliness, their purity, their reverence for womanhood, their loyalty, their sense of honour, their willing self-sacrifice. We have in our own time found moralists trying to shame their countrymen by holding before them idealised pictures of the virtues of what were regarded as lower races, and we read the famous work of Tacitus with reserve. In modern Germany, however, the book is taken very seriously. It is the first true depiction of the German soul. The rotund Berlin official who quaffs his beer on the banks of the Spree would hardly recognise himself in the pages of Tacitus ; the young woman who spends the night in Berlin's exotic dance-

rooms, and the young man who goes at midnight to its cafés with "exclusive society," are very far from this patriarchal psychology. But the general assurance suffices. In those remote ages, when the German spirit was yet uncontaminated by mixture with alien races, it was selected by the greatest historian of the greatest existing civilisation as the most virile and most virtuous thing that came within the wide purview of Rome.

History is easily reconstructed in such a manner as to show that this German soul shines with its old energy and virtue. The Romans probably smiled at Tacitus, as Englishmen in the eighteenth century smiled at Pope and Frenchmen at Rousseau ; but within four hundred years the northerners were trampling on the ruins of the Roman Empire, from the gates of Constantinople to the Pillars of Hercules. Most of these northerners mingled with the lower (Roman and half-Roman) peoples, contracted their vices, and took in the germs of decay. The "Germans," the ideal people of Tacitus, remained in the bracing forests of the north. From them issues the first great founder of European civilisation, Charlemagne : from them issue the Hohenstaufens and Ottos, the masters and makers of medieval Europe : from them comes the purifying storm of the Reformation. While Spain and Portugal and Holland were struggling for mere material supremacy in the sixteenth century, the German soul was wrestling with and solving the

religious problem of Europe. While England and France were dividing the globe between them and piling up their national wealth in the eighteenth century, the German soul was still absorbed in spiritual tasks, inspiring its Goethe and Schiller, its Kant and Fichte, its mystics and its romanticists. So it has retained its virginal freshness until the appointed time. Now that the Latin nations (the French, for instance) and the inferior Teutonic stocks (such as the English) are decadent, now that barbarism (Russia, China, and Japan) lowers on the horizon, the German soul must assert its power and virtue for the salvation of mankind ; and the triumphant, unprecedented advance, since Frederic William III led the attack upon Napoleon, gives proof, if proof were needed, of its especial virility.

Thus has history been taught for many years in Germany : taught in the elementary school, the college, and the university, and impressed upon the nation at large by a hundred brilliant writers and glowing orators. It is hardly necessary to observe that this belief in a unique, priceless, all-conquering German soul is, whether it be true or untrue, a very important element in the psychology of the German people. The great masses of the people may know little about the compliments which Tacitus paid to their ancestors, or about the deeds of the old Hohenstaufens, but they are familiar with the Reformation and with the recent history of their

nation, and they are easily persuaded that these things revealed a mighty energy. Educated people, on the other hand, may smile at some of the more fanciful excesses of this creed, but the substance of the creed has the support of many of their chief cultural leaders. Some of their most distinguished savants have declared that in this present crisis the fate of civilisation depends upon the victory of *Germanenthum*—the Germanic spirit. The Germans are, with all their skill and success in practical work, a sentimental people. Their ways, their books, their journals abound in sentimental features which one would hardly find elsewhere. And this belief in a German soul with a lofty mission to lead the race is nicely calculated to flatter their imaginations and emotions.

Let us try to disentangle fact from fiction in the German creed and to ascertain the real features of the German character. I need not examine at any length the fantastic version of the history of Germany on which the modern myth is based. Tacitus and the Romans give the name of *Germani* to the immense variety of tribes whom they discovered to the east of the Rhine. Most of these tribes were clearly akin, and are grouped by modern scientists under the general head of "Teutonic," from the name of one of the tribes. The name "Germans" does not seem to have been used by themselves. Since, however, they were undoubtedly the chief progenitors of the modern "Germans" and other

Teutonic peoples, we need not linger over their obscure early movements.

But assuredly these Germanic tribes were not distinguished above other European tribes for either virtue or chivalry. The Goths and Vandals did not make that impression on Roman observers when they came into clearer view. The Teutonic tribes were less peaceful than the Slavs, and were far slower than the Arabs or the Turks in assimilating civilisation. Compare these words of Gibbon (ch. xxv), which are strictly based on the original authorities : “ The Thuringians served in the army of Attila. . . . They massacred their hostages, as well as their captives ; two hundred young maidens were tortured with exquisite and unrelenting rage ; their bodies were torn asunder by wild horses, or their bones were crushed under the weight of rolling waggons ; and their unburied limbs were abandoned on the public roads, as a prey to dogs and vultures. Such were those savage ancestors, whose imaginary virtues have sometimes excited the praise and envy of civilised ages.” One may add that the Prussians in particular were not Germanic, but a mixture of Slav and a cognate race ; and although the (German) Teutonic knights fell on them with appalling ferocity, and virtually exterminated them, the population of East and West Prussia is still very far from being pure German. Indeed, there is a very large infusion of Slav blood over wide areas of Germany, and of

Celtic blood in others. Some recent French writers have affected to trace what we call Prussian characteristics to the ancient Prussian race. It is necessary to emphasise that this race was destroyed by the Germans, and the modern Prussians are not their descendants.

Again, we may dismiss very briefly the contention that the great figures of later European history or culture owed their distinction to some shred of northern ancestry. It is enough to observe that whatever great men the "German" stock produced during the Middle Ages appeared, not in the relatively pure-blooded north and centre, but in those regions where Celt and Latin and Slav blood had mingled with the German. We need not discuss seriously whether Leonardo da Vinci and Michael Angelo were Germanic in some part of their heritage ; it would follow only that the Germanic blood produced its best when it mingled with the blood of other races. The Reformation, on the other hand, certainly had a predominantly German character in its final phase, but this was due to political and geographical circumstances rather than to the moral qualities of the northerners. The later literary and spiritual activity of Germany, in the eighteenth century, was confined to a few individuals living amidst a sluggish and indifferent population ; in the whole hundred years which preceded that belated German renascence the German soul had produced only one great man.

In fine, the historic creators of the greatness of modern Germany—Frederic, Gneisenau, Blucher, Bismarck, and William II—have not been conspicuous for those qualities of sincerity, chivalry, and reverence for ideals which Tacitus ascribes to the ancient German character.

Thus the idea that there has been some definite and unaltering German soul manifesting itself throughout the history of Europe is a piece either of academic affectation or of political chicanery. We must take the German people as we find them in modern times, and endeavour patiently, by a direct study of their character, to determine their distinctive qualities. Even in this, however, we have first to set aside a good deal of that strained and fictitious reasoning which the German scholar is so apt to prefer to plain description of things.

There are two antagonistic schools in modern German discussion of the national character. One set of writers, whose pleas we will consider later, maintain, as I said, that the German soul is rising to its most glorious manifestation: that the approaching triumph of its idealism lights up for men the whole avenue of the future. This is incomparably the larger and more popular school. But another set of German writers, less in number but of equal or greater authority, deplore that in recent decades the great soul of Germany has sunk deep in spiritual sloth, in vice and selfish indulgence, in all that is suggested by that horrid-sounding word

"materialism." Professor Paulsen and Professor Simmel of Berlin, Professor Thode of Heidelberg, and other distinguished scholars, use this language. It finds an interesting expression in the popular works of Dr. F. Berolzheimer, *Germany of To-Day* (1910) and *The Morality and Society of the Twentieth Century* (1914). The writer finds some cheerful symptoms, which he does not very definitely confide to the reader, that Germany is about to *return* to idealism, "the primitive domain of the German spirit"—on the authority of Tacitus, of course—but in the actual life of his country he can see little more than "an Americanised egocentric struggle for wealth and power." The art of Germany has only technical merit, he says, and her science is formal and experimental; while he devotes pages to the weird and hectic vices of the great cities. In the end he summarises the great material achievements of modern Germany, and observes: "One thing only we lack—culture"!

This strain is not at all uncommon in recent German literature. The foreigner has of late received the very natural impression that Germany is united in wishing to impose, by the arts of peace or by war, its "culture" upon the world, but the impression is not wholly just. Probably the mass of the German people have almost as hazy a notion of the meaning of this treasured *Kultur* as the average Englishman has, though few of them would conceive it, as we conceive "culture," in the purely

intellectual sense. German scholars often distinguish between *Kultur* and *Civilisation* (for which they have no distinct German word) in the sense that *Kultur* means the internal attitude of the soul toward life and nature, and "civilisation" is its outward expression in institutions. Generally the word *Kultur* expresses both of these things, and the pride of Germany refers to both. Here, however, I am concerned only with the inner or spiritual meaning, and there have been grave writers warning Germany for the last twenty years that its mood or outlook has ceased to be idealistic and is increasingly materialistic.

This difference, or direct contradiction, of opinions warns us to proceed with care. Throughout the whole range of German letters one feature is persistently ascribed to the national soul—idealism. In that you have the secret of the strange conceit which has of late possessed so many Germans, that they, by imposing their *Kultur* on the race at large, are destined to save humanity. It is a common practice to represent that the supreme struggle of our time is a contest of idealism and materialism for the control of life. If the German soul is marked above all others by its idealism, surely the world will gain by its triumph? That is the serious thread in the tangle of modern German thought; yet we have this strange spectacle of able German writers and acute observers flatly contradicting each other in regard to this supreme characteristic.

We brush aside this perplexing quarrel of the German students, who ought best to know the psychology of their people, and we endeavour to observe for ourselves. We then at once perceive the enormous difficulty of bringing under a common formula all the diverse elements of the German nation. What features are there in common between the primitive Wend peasant of the Spree-Wald—not far from Berlin—and the Socialist artisan or the “modern woman” of the capital? Between the dour and plodding worker of North Prussia and the gay and easy-going Bavarian? Between the Pole of Posen and the bright, clean, sober peasant of the Rhine valley? What, indeed, is the meaning of that process which is so familiar in German history, the “Germanising” of a conquered province? Down to our own time we witness this attempt to impose, by the artificial exertions of an army of teachers and officials, a certain psychological stamp upon a people who resent it as foreign to their nature.

The case of Belgium sufficiently warns us to beware of those racial theories which so strangely seduce German scholars. Holland and Belgium, they said, are fragments of the dismembered German people. The German soul breathes in them. They must return to their natural body and enlarge the power for good of the great mother-race. But Belgium and Holland felt no call of the blood, and recent events have made a mockery of the supposed

racial affinity. Had Belgium been willing to receive the bribes which Germany was willing to offer, had she voluntarily entered the federation of Germanic peoples, the historian of no distant date might have commented on the blood-relationship or common soul of the reunited peoples. As it is, the German and the Belgian peoples are separated by a memory which will hardly fade in ten generations ; and it would, for many years to come, be the deadliest provocation to suggest to a Belgian of this generation that his blood or character is the same as that of the hated people beyond the Rhine, who once made a charred ruin of his dear land and left among the ashes, when they retired, the bones of old men and women and children.

Apart from the provinces which have been forcibly incorporated in the German Empire, and display a character either wholly (as in Posen) or partly (as in Alsace and Lorraine) different from anything that we could call German character, we have to recognise a broad distinction between the north and the south. The soundness of the distinction is plainly seen in the more or less good-natured disputes of Berlin and Munich. Berlin, says the southerner, is "like a large third-class waiting-room." It is noisy and bustling, and as eager as Chicago to make dollars. It is wonderfully organised. Its straight streets, planted with straight rows of trees and lined by straight, monotonous blocks of high tenements, put Paris or London to

shame by their cleanliness and barrack-like trimness. Its transit service is admirable. Its very workers have organised themselves as the workers of no other city in the world have done. It has, in its large sense of order and its determination not to be outdone, sought to clothe its utilitarian solidity with a mantle of art ; but here we reach the limitation of its character. There is too little spontaneity in its art, too little joy in its life. Its favourite decoration is stucco ; and its proud Sieges-Allee, in which it displays marble statues of its kings, is " a row of dolls." It reads an æsthetic charm into the massive and costly. It is " in the infancy of culture." Even its sense of joy in life is so perverted by its ideals that it consumes more erotic literature than Paris and shelters an appalling mass of unnatural vice ; its police report that they have, in spite of their despotic powers, thirty thousand " sex-perverts " to control. Its students are too serious and laborious ; its lower bourgeoisie too vapid and boisterous ; its women too forward, hard, and prone to rebel ; its intellectual itching for novelties too little in accord with its emphatic Germanism.

Munich, on the other hand, these southerners boast, is placid, contented, prettily disordered, artistic in every vein, healthily happy, satisfied with such tried and God-sent luxuries as beer and music and sunshine. Munich is a man of middle age, with ripe experience of life and rounded paunch,

watching with good-natured cynicism the violent exertions and violent recreations of the young men of the north. It loves peace, and leaves the glorification of war to the pedants of Berlin. Bavaria has gone beyond any other German state in discouraging the duel. When such necessities of life as the milder climate demands have been secured, the Münchener loves to sit behind his tankard of dark-brown ale, near a good band, or wander through his fine galleries. He hardly understands this "place in the sun" for which Berlin is preparing to bring darkness on the world. His tramways are bad and dear ; he has had ages of bad government ; his industrial resources have been imperfectly developed lest the plague of Socialism should find a hotbed in the larger masses of artisans. But he prefers individual comfort, moderate work and easy leisure, the cheap enjoyment of nature and art, simple and graceful luxuries, the armchair and the friendly chat, to all the hard-won solidity and exacting ambition of the Berliner. The Berliner retorts that he lacks vigour of will and freshness of intellect, and the "smart" class of Munich is rapidly Berlinising itself. But the genuine Münchener smiles : it may be less bracing to live in the valley, but it is safer and more comfortable.

So the controversy runs between Berlin and Munich, and, after certain deductions, it gives us the measure of the difference between north and south. Munich is not a typical southern town

it is the metropolis of Bavaria. Berlin is not a Prussian town : it is the cosmopolis of Prussia. The hectic vice of Berlin, of which Forel and Berolzheimer and others give so dark a picture, is not German : it is a metropolitan product, the worse in this case because Berlin is new to metropolitan life. To seek the German character in Berlin is a tantalising task. For nearly a century and a half it has, like a magnet, attracted the more vigorous, the more adventurous, in part the less scrupulous, elements from all parts of Germany. Slav, Celt, and Teuton—northerner and southerner—are hopelessly intermingled in its population, and such common features as there are in them have rather been impressed by their common metropolitan environment. It is the psychology of a crowd rather than the psychology of a race, and it is further deeply influenced by the fact that Berlin is the centre of a unique political organism, which sternly impresses its peculiar needs on the people, and is the first point of cultural contact with other civilisations. In our age nations come into contact at their hearts, not at their extremities. Hence you find the university students at Berlin generally eschewing the distinctive German gewgaws and pranks that they love at Bonn and Jena. You find the mass of artisans more advanced politically than those of any other capital in the world—Berlin is solidly Socialistic—instead of exhibiting the docile or cowed temper one associates with Prussia. You

find the women scorning the old German tradition of domestic slavery and subservience, and producing one of the most advanced feminist literatures in the world. To a great extent Munich shows the same metropolitan adulteration of the South German spirit. Hamburg and Cologne are similarly mixed.

Taking careful account of these things, we still find certain differences. In the north are greater energy of will, the seriousness of a man with a task to do or a future to make, that tendency to subordinate imagination to intellect which makes organisers, a disposition to take command and obedience as normal parts of life, a dogged determination that is ready for great exertion and sacrifice and may on occasion brush aside hampering rules. In other words, the northerner has admittedly a harder, more energetic, more intellectual, more ambitious character than the southerner.

Rhineland, Hesse, Thuringia, and Saxony form a belt across the middle of Germany. North of that, generally, you have the type I have described : south of it you have the softer, more easygoing, less ambitious, more artistic, more *human* type. There are, of course, great differences in each sphere. Posen is not German at all ; it has heatedly resisted Germanisation for decades. Silesia is the most southern part of the northern region, but industrial developments and Berlin influence have led it nearer to the northern type. Prussia is very

largely agricultural, and has, besides the dulled traits of agricultural life, a very strong infusion of Slav blood. Westphalia and Hanover, on account of their industries and commerce, have the features of mental alertness and originality more developed than the features of vigorous routine and obedient strength. Rhineland, an old battleground of Gauls and Germans, a genial and fertile land, comes nearer to the south in temperament.

This general distinction of north and south is not so much a matter of race as of history and environment. One cause is obvious. The southerner is nearer to the sun : he has a longer and more relaxing summer, a shorter and less fierce winter to struggle against, a less reluctant soil. The historical reasons also are easily traced. Until modern times civilisation has advanced in successive waves from the south. The Romans stopped at Cologne (*Colonia Agrippina*, the outpost of civilisation founded by the Empress Agrippina). The Renaissance travelled slowly along the Rhine valley and the Danube valley, but it was dammed further north by the revolt against Roman "paganism," as the Reformers conceived the rebellion they set afoot. A distinguished German historian, Heinrich von Sybel, says, speaking of the early Middle Ages : "The great Swabian and Bavarian poems of chivalry and love were as incomprehensible to the northern Germans as the legends of Low Germany were to the people of the south." The

Reformation partly arose from, and partly deepened this contrast. A German professor of great distinction once wrote that one of the causes of what he conceived to be the heaviness and coarseness of English character was that England had no wine. This ridiculous libel of England does embody a general truth. The vine is a symbol of sun-lit, short-wintered lands, the lands in which the "pagan" spirit of impulse and mirth and ease is ever rebelling against discipline. The Reformation was, in its origin, a Puritan movement, not a doctrinal quarrel, and it severely emphasized the tendency of north and south to differ in *Kultur*. When it was completed, the southern Catholic states remained in cultural contact with Italy and France; the northern states turned rather to cold-blooded, meditative Scandinavia and Denmark, and brooded over and battled for creeds.

The more recent historical development will concern us later, and I need only recall, briefly, that it tended to maintain the contrast. Prussia and Brandenburg set themselves a formidable earthly task when they grew tired of brooding over St. Paul and turned to Cæsar and Machiavelli. They would unite the scattered German peoples under their lead, and the ambition developed the more severe features of the northern character. The southern states long remained indifferent to this ambition, and they awoke to find themselves robbed by it of their easy independence. To this

day Prussia dins in their ears the story of its mighty achievements ; and the southern states know quite well that they are admitted to a share of the glory only in order that they may be induced to share the burden of the next enterprise of the vigorous young man of the north.

When we are seeking to understand the character of Germany as it has recently displayed itself, we must keep this distinction in mind, because Prussia notoriously imposed its ideals on the south. First, however, we must try to find what features are common to north and south, to find if there is such a thing as this " German soul " of which almost every German writer speaks, just as we used to speak of " the superiority of the Anglo-Saxon." Perhaps the best method is to study the central Germans. The adolescent character—the mood of the young man who is in a hurry to make his fortune, who is eager for big things and for mastery, who is prepared for intense labour and for sacrifices—is, on the whole, spread over Prussia, Brandenburg, Silesia, Pomerania, Mecklenburg, Schleswig-Holstein, Hanover, Westphalia, North Rhineland, and North Saxony. The mellower temperament—the mood of the contented man, past middle age, who has attained a modest comfort and thinks the prizes of a fight not worth the blows—is generally characteristic of Bavaria, Wurtemberg, Baden, Alsace, and Lorraine. Between them lie the lower part of the Rhine Province, Hesse, Thuringia, and

Saxony. West of the Rhine there is neither pure German blood nor typical German character, though Cologne and the cities of the Rhine have long been centres of education in German ideals. It is along the girdle of Germany, from Coblenz or Weisbaden to Dresden, that you find the purest German blood and the average German character.

I remember travelling slowly across that beautiful and charming belt of country at one of the periods when dissatisfaction with English policy was acute, and the Navy League and Pan-German League had drenched Germany with a hostile and arrogant literature. There was no open offence, though one noticed here and there a quick flash of the eye or turn of the lip when speech betrayed the Britisher. One or two military men only were sullen, almost discourteous ; and a large group of university students, dining boisterously in the same room, showed very openly a far from friendly interest, little checked by the circumstance that I was the guest of one of the most eminent of their professors. I recall, too, that a waiter was subtly insolent—one in many. On the whole, one had an impression of a kindly, courteous, easy-laboured, pleasure-loving, humane, honourable, entirely honest people.

At a little inn on the battle-field near Jena I took my *Abend-Mahl* with my distinguished host. We sat in a corner of the large, square, single room, eating Thuringian steak (cooked with alum), and

rye bread, and tallow-like Thuringian cheese ; and young country couples, or students from the town, came in—my learned host, a Privy Councillor, rising from his bench every three minutes to wish each simple soul a cordial *Guten Abend*—to have merry talk over their tankards or tapering glasses of Thuringian ale. One missed the aroma and the manners of a similarly situated English public-house : young girls of seventeen sat over ale as gracefully as if it were coffee. As we returned to the town, I noticed that the few passengers left the interior of the tram to the scholar and his guest, and crowded on the little platform outside. Then a great red flare in the heavens caught my eye, and I lit upon the initiation of a new member into one of the students' societies. They gathered outside an inn, which had already obviously done good trade with them—a student told me that twelve pints would not be an extraordinary consumption on such an occasion, and that it was not unknown for youths to retire, like ancient Roman patricians, to the *vomitorium*—and in a long procession (the neophyte, bearing a huge bouquet, walking at the head under a patriotic banner) they marched gravely to the statue of their great Duke in the market-place, each bearing a tankard full of beer and chanting some deep-growled hymn, of which I caught only the appropriate refrain, “*getrunken.*” After a semi-solemn speech at the foot of the statue, and vigorous flag-waving, they poured a

little libation on the stones, and a very large libation down their throats, and returned, chanting and clicking the lids of the empty tankards, to the busy inn. I contrasted the deadly solemnity with which students had once listened to me in Glasgow University, the wild pranks of London undergraduates when I spoke in London University, the aristocratic boredom I had seen in my audience at Oxford, the alert and cheerful attention at Cambridge and New York.

Indoors one noticed the grave good-nature and generosity to strangers, the ceremonious courtesy—the “gesegnete Mahlzeit” and clasp of the hand after a good meal—the instinctive and simple taste in furniture, the neatness even of the poor, the general air of solidity and prosperity in a world of small incomes. In the work-day afternoon one saw large cheap restaurants where crowds of merry coffee-drinkers and beer-drinkers sat side by side, almost drowning with their lively chatter the excellent music provided. At Weimar I sat at night in the common room attached to the little hotel, and watched the married couples of all ages, and the young folk of both sexes, down to sixteen or seventeen years, pour in and out and call quietly for the fat tankards and the tall, tapering ladies’ glasses. My patience and beer-capacity were exhausted by midnight, but the maid told me the nightly festival—it was an ordinary work-day—would last till three. At Gotha I received, in a

hotel which seemed externally to rival the Savoy, and was spacious and stately within, a bill of three marks (3s.) for bed and breakfast ; and I had the unique experience, when I reminded them that I had sent a porter to buy soap for me, of seeing only the exact price of the tablet (3d.) put on the bill. Was there a French or Italian hotel in the world that would stoop to charge less than a franc or a lira ? At Frankfort, at Neuss—as far as the gates of Cologne—one found the same comparative simplicity, patriarchal enjoyment of life, good taste, unpretentious and unambitious fellowship, easy courtesy, ingrained sense of honour, accessibility and helpfulness. . . . And but a few weeks ago I read in an American paper a letter in which my genial and learned Jena friend, who to me had typified all this charming contentment and grave courtesy, called in strident terms for the utter and bloody extirpation of England from the comity of great nations ! That is the psychological problem of Germany.

The “ German soul ” has not the heroic qualities which Germany’s scholars and artists attribute to it. Taking one writer with another, we gather that the distinctive virtues of the German character are believed to be idealism, loyalty (*Treue*), good-nature (*Gemüthlichkeit*), a strong sense of honour, an untainted energy, a prompt spirit of self-sacrifice. It is preposterous to claim this coruscation of virtues for the German character : the legend is a quite

innocent fabrication of the typical German professor, who, in the true Hegelian spirit, confuses ideas and realities. He blends the compliments of the ancient Roman historian, the prettier fragments of the old northern *sagas*, the more edifying pages of medieval history, and a very Prussian version of the deeds of Frederic the Great and Blücher, into a symmetrical picture, and leaves it to teachers and politicians to persuade the mass of the people that it is a portrait of themselves. They know better ; but as a rule they know neighbouring nations only from the libellous pages of their historians and pamphleteers, and they succeed in persuading themselves that they probably are at least more virtuous—more idealistic, loyal, humane, and honourable—than the perfidious English, the barbaric Slavs, and the decadent French.

If you turn to seek the impressions of the shrewdest travellers from other lands, you still find it almost insurmountably difficult to bring the German peoples under a common formula. Method, organisation, rigorous pursuit of a clear design, is the chief characteristic, say one group of writers ; good-nature, romance, artistic sensibility, ease, and brotherliness are the specific virtues, say other writers. Clearly, these are descriptions of North and South Germany respectively, not of a single people. They are, to a great extent, incompatible virtues, and, when mingled strains of ancestry unite them in one character, they struggle.

Goethe found himself endowed with the regulative intelligence of his somewhat sombre father and the buoyancy, impatient of regulation, of his mother : “ Two souls, alas, dwell in my breast : the one would fain separate itself from the other. The one clings, with persevering fondness, to the world, with organs like cramps of steel ; the other lifts itself energetically from the mist to the realms of an exalted ancestry.”

They are the two souls of Germany, meeting, fitly enough, in Frankfort and Thuringia. In the present Emperor, as we shall see, there is a similar blend of antithetic qualities, and it helps to account both for his power in uniting Germany and for the tragedy of his development. Generally speaking, the two characters are distinct ; and they are distinctive, respectively, of north and south. One finds much art in Berlin—the artistic education of the people is, perhaps, more successful than in any other metropolis—but it is an education due to regulative intelligence, which would omit nothing of the complete city ; and one finds much enterprise in Saxony and parts of Bavaria—even Jena has magnificent industrial establishments—but it is due to Prussian tutorship and industrial conditions.

Even if we exclude Posen, Alsace, and Lorraine, we find few qualities which may definitely be ascribed to the entire German people and not to other peoples. The first discovery of the penetrating traveller is the remarkable measure of

identity in human nature all the world over. It is the superficial and voluble man who easily discovers national characteristics. The Germans—to speak only of the high virtues they claim—are not more heroic, more idealistic, better natured, or more self-sacrificing than their neighbours. But their general belief that they are, their proneness to dwell on their own virtues and achievements, are symptoms of a broad national characteristic. We are getting near the “soul” of Germany, in the distinctive sense of the word. If we recall that England and France have passed through precisely the same phase, we understand it better. These qualities are not due to weakness, but to strength—the strength of juvenility or adolescence.

Mr. W. Harbutt Dawson, one of our best writers on Germany, speaks, in describing the recreations of the Germans, of “the essential simplicity and naïveté of the German nature.” That is sound characterisation : it brings under one head not merely the robust and boastful aggressiveness of the north, but that quality of old-world sentimentality, that leaning toward romance, that acquiescence in authority and control, that proneness to accept flattering delusions and dark suspicions, that measure of innocent abandonment in pleasure, which do more or less distinguish the Germans from the French or English. Even the supposed sentimental Frenchman does not announce in the press that his wife has given birth to “a fine healthy

boy": does not affectionately clasp your hand, after a good dinner, and say "blessed meal": does not jealously guard his vocabulary from foreign invaders: does not tolerate an army of three million paternal State-officials: does not, and *could* not, join (as grave German professors are known to do) in the "salamander" and other weird performances by which the German student relieves the monotony of a drinking bout: does not display, in his domestic ceremonies, a tithe of the primitive tenderness displayed by all but the very modern Germans. The Germans are greater makers of fairy-tales than the English or French, greater mythologists, greater masters of symbolism and of the more naïve kind of patriotic rhetoric, more conservative of medieval customs and of woman's medieval servitude, and far more punctilious about courtesy-titles.

This freshness or naïveté of sentiment, united with at least a normal kindness, honour, and honesty, with a full human share of vice (the illegitimate birth-rate of Germany is nearly treble that of England, or 27.7 to 10.9), and with a somewhat heavy type of humour, is the German character. It is, of course, like all types, an abstraction: in the flesh you find infinite variations. It differs vastly in the little old-world towns of Baden, where you may still see the quaint costumes of long ago, and where shop-windows and advertisements are unknown, and in the cities: in the peasant or small

farmer of Prussia and the artisan of Westphalia : in the vivacious peasant-girl of the lower Rhine valley and the gravely cheerful Bavarian or the plodding Saxon. But the description fairly represents what there is of reality and distinction in "the German soul," and it gives Germany a position of exceptional interest in Europe. Mr. Dawson opined, only a few years ago, that "there is no more pacific people in Europe," yet there is no doubt to-day that, at the very time when this shrewd observer pronounced his opinion, the German people were preparing to bring a terrible war on Europe. Let me emphasise that cruelty and deception are *not* parts of the German character. The native German character has no more of these defects than any other national character, and has less than some. Let me repeat, too, that the idea of a simple nation having been dragged, without its consent, into this war, or been duped into consenting to the war, is wholly wrong : and that the German people, as a body, have endorsed what seem to us the foul deeds of their leaders and soldiers. How do we solve this further psychological problem ?

I spoke on an earlier page of certain German writers who have for ten or twenty years urged that the national character was deteriorating. It is conceivable that when the war is over some of these writers will play the part of the Hebrew prophet amid the ruin. But it is not true that, as

these writers are fond of saying, Germany was once “a people of poets and thinkers,” and has become “Americanised.” They are referring to Germany in the days of Klopstock and Goethe and Schiller, of Herder and Kant. They overlook the fact that in the hundred years before that stirring period Germany produced only one thinker and a few poor poets ; and that the bulk of the German people, even in the latter part of the eighteenth century, took very little notice of Kant and Herder, and only a small minority of them read Goethe and Schiller. Goethe’s description of the dull, maddening Philistinism of his native Frankfort, of the smug, conceited Philistinism of the Berlin of Frederic the Great, and of the naïvely ignorant Philistinism of Weimar itself (apart from the Court), is a sufficient answer to this piece of academic romance. One might as well say that England was a nation of poets and thinkers in the days of George III because it produced Byron and Shelley, Gibbon and Adam Smith and Paley.

Yet we must recognise that the change in the fortunes of Germany in the last hundred years, especially in the last fifty years, was bound to have a deep influence on the national character. In Goethe’s time “Germany” consisted of nearly half a hundred larger and smaller States and free cities and other petty political spheres with little in common but their language. Its resources were almost entirely agricultural : its towns were gener-

ally market or university towns, widely separated, drowsy, each swathed in its dead political traditions. Berlin in the far north and Vienna in the far south looked with some feeling of superiority over this strange aggregation of sleepy princedoms. Scholars, who read in their books that there had once been a mighty German *nation*, gazed on the little principalities, each proud of its littleness, with some disgust. Then came the Imperialist movement in Prussia under Frederic, and the literary nationalist movement throughout Germany ; but then came, also, Napoleon, kicking down their little barriers, and the Council of Vienna restoring the little barriers, and Germany remained a comparatively poor and disunited family, while England and France grew rich on the new industry and divided the lands beyond the sea into colonies. It was, chiefly, English enterprise that provided this more or less childlike, bucolic aggregation of peoples with their first railways and gas-works and efficient water-supplies, their first textile and chemical and engineering works : for the greater glory of England.

Since the great consolidation of the scattered States into an Empire in 1871 a phenomenal advance has taken place. The population has risen from forty millions to seventy millions. The young industries have been taken over by the German people and developed, since 1880, into one of the finest industrial systems in the world. Statisticians tell us that from 1880 to 1908 the annual production

of steel increased from 624,000 to 11,000,000 tons (while that of Britain increased less than fivefold) : that the output of coal and iron have increased more than fourfold : that the horse-power of Germany's machinery has risen from 984,000 to 6,754,468 (in 1909). In optical, chemical, and electrical manufacture Germany has beaten the world—in forty years. It has applied each new discovery of science to the development of its vast mineral resources : it has instituted a system of technical training which has not merely manned its own industries and commerce, but has distributed German experts over the world : it has given financial assistance and inspired its great banks to assist : it has succeeded in inducing its artisans, while its middle-class became millionaires, to continue to work harder, for less wage, than the artisans of other nations : it has outstripped the world in schemes of artisan insurance and social work. Its debt has increased tenfold, it is true : from 486,201,000 marks in 1887 to 4,896,633,500 in 1909. But this is not the dead loss of a war-debt : the money is invested in profitable enterprise, such as railways. Mr. Ellis Barker says that the Prussian State Railways were purchased for £475,000,000, and are now worth £1,000,000,000.

The first and least avoidable effect of this wonderful prosperity is—let us say it frankly—conceit. England was just as conceited when, in the early nineteenth century, it reared a vast fabric of pros-

perity on the basis of its manufactures, its shipping, and its annexation of India. So was Rome in the Augustan Age—the “ruler of the world” anticipating the “ruler of the sea”—or Venice in the fifteenth century, or Spain in the sixteenth. America and Australia have made, in proportion to their population, equal advance in the same period, but there is a peculiar difference in the case of Germany. It has a long history to look back upon. What had become of that German soul described by Tacitus, the soul that had flamed out again in the Carolingians, the Hohenstaufens, the Reformers, the Hohenzollerns, the great poets and philosophers? Plainly this new prosperity showed that it was still alive, still the master-soul of the world. Were not even these proud Englishmen telling each other, in their journals and magazines, to study and imitate German education, German technical and commercial methods, German social experiments, and German science?

The second effect of this prosperity was to excite a real concern about the future. The population had risen steadily from 40,000,000 in 1870 to 65,000,000 in 1910. In the same period the population of France had increased only from 36,000,000 to 39,000,000 : the population of the United Kingdom from 31,000,000 to 45,000,000. It was expected that in 1925 the population of Germany would be 80,000,000, and it could grow corn only for 40,000,000 people. An alarming prospect,

surely, for a nation with hostile neighbours and an inferior power at sea. In point of fact, it was not so alarming as many imagined. The birth-rate is rapidly falling in Germany. In 1876 the birth-rate was 42.6 per 1000 of the population : in Berlin it was 45.4. In 1911 the rate was 29.5 for Germany, and very much less for Berlin. Now it is 28.6. Since 1900 the decrease has been rapid, and there is no doubt that the town-population is in increasing numbers practising artificial restriction. Like all other civilised nations, Germany will in this respect fall into line with France, and the querulous plea that it will henceforward have 600,000 superfluous citizens to sacrifice for the prosperity of other nations is unfounded.

But there was another aspect of the new prosperity. The German industrial machine was producing more than the German commercial machine could distribute. The mercantile marine had assumed gigantic proportions, and German merchants were scattered over the world. Yet there was a growing cry for new markets, colonies, spheres of influence. Let us see the situation with German eyes.

“We are,” any German might truthfully say, “one of the greatest nations in the world, and our high birth-rate gives us the promise of becoming *the* greatest. But such is our territorial position, locked between rival States in the centre of Europe, that our land cannot grow with our industries and

our population. Every year our self-sacrificing mothers must bear and rear hundreds of thousands of sons who, when they reach manhood and would repay their debt to the mother who bore them, must bid good-bye to the beloved flag and the dear hills and valleys, and go out to make the fortune of England or America, of Brazil or Argentina. Every year we see the threat of a limit to the enterprise of our capitalists and to the productiveness of our sober, skilful, and hard-working artisans. We want to keep our children, and they want to remain, under the old black, white, and red flag. We want lands in which they may feel as free as the Englishman does in Australia, or the Frenchman in Algiers. We want a larger pitch, proportioned to our business and our capacity, in the market of the world. Yet, the moment we seek an outlet across the decaying Turkish Empire, Russia bars the way. The moment we look at South America and its vast untenanted spaces, the United States waves its Monroe doctrine. The moment we think of North Africa, France bristles with indignation ; and when we turn to South Africa, England flourishes its Union Jack."

These were the reflections of sober-minded Germans as the great pile of their national prosperity grew. Quite inevitably the new situation altered the psychology of the German people. It is foolish to speak of greed and materialism and degeneration, in so far as this change is concerned.

Germany had every right to enter the new industrial life of the world and prosper in it. But how came she to depart so far from what I have described as her normal moral complexion? How came the nation, as a whole, to enter joyfully upon a plainly aggressive campaign, to crush the life out of an innocent and feeble neighbour, to sanction grave and repeated departures from the law and practice of civilised war, and to lend itself to a collective cultivation of hatred which makes its features repulsive to any one who knows the Germany of earlier days?

Patient historical examination will show us how certain influences have been directing Germany to this fatal term during a hundred years, and how, when these influences coincided with the new need, or apparent need, of expansion, the psychic development becomes fully intelligible. We have all heard of a Professor von Treitschke and a General von Bernhardi, who for years have instigated Germany to prepare for an aggressive war. But one does not understand either the abrupt appearance of these men, or the way in which two writers—and one a man of no distinction—could attain so powerful an influence over “the most peaceful people in the world.” So strange, indeed, is the claim that these two men influenced Germany to any grave extent, that some would prefer to cling to the legend that a few wicked schemers involved the peaceful German people in war, and that the two

isolated fire-eaters had no more real effect than their fellows in any country. If we would understand Germany, we must realise that these two writers are merely two out of a hundred ; that their doctrines have been disseminated by the most powerful and authoritative agencies in Germany ; and that by the year 1914 the far greater part of Germany was imbued with their sentiments and listened eagerly for the call to arms. The story is long and interesting, but here I must tell it briefly.

The source of this fatal stream of aggressive Imperialism must be put in the reign of Frederic the Great. In Frederic's time the old religious and moral traditions were in decay, and the world had not yet elaborated its new human faith. The King turned back to Machiavelli, and, while affecting to refute *The Prince*, adopted some of its worse maxims, and added part of Poland and Silesia to his dominions. I am not concerned with his military efficiency, but with his cynical disregard of moral principle in State-action. Since, however, Frederic *was* a great prince and did enlarge his kingdom, later German historians have written his life in heroic terms and found ample apologies for his unscrupulousness.

This germ lay in the soil of Germany, as it were, awaiting favourable conditions for its development. The armies of the French Republic and of Napoleon swept over the land, and by a very natural reaction a national self-consciousness was born.

Goethe smiled at the patriots, but Goethe himself and his great colleagues had endeavoured to enkindle a nationalist spirit in Germany (on the artistic side), and the prostration of the German people, from Berlin to Vienna, made many reflect how mighty that people would be if it were united. It was then that the poet Arndt wrote his stirring song, *What is the German's Fatherland?* His answer was, "Wherever the German tongue resounds." It was then that Fichte, the dreamy philosopher, cried : "To have character and to be German are unquestionably the same thing." For the first time in centuries nearly the whole German people united, in the final attack on Napoleon. In the distribution of the spoils Prussia got part of Poland and Saxony and Rhineland and Pomerania. But Prussia had wanted more, and it remained an ugly tradition at Berlin that France and England and Russia thwarted it. Germany remained dismembered : a confederation of thirty-eight petty States and cities, with Austria and Prussia at either end, each eager for supreme control.

At this time an able Prussian statesman, Baron von Stein, invited the historians of Germany to form an association, and in this association we have the second and principal source of the Imperialist tradition. Baron von Stein knew history and its political value. He knew that the empire of Alexander had grown out of the little kingdom of Macedonia : the empire of the Cæsars out of the

tiny republic of early Rome : the English Empire out of the kingdom of Wessex : France out of the little Isle de France. So Prussia was, in Stein's opinion, " a nucleus for future German crystallisation." Niebuhr and Mommsen, the great historians of ancient Rome, supported him to the extent of insisting, in their lectures and books, that a strong nation, with a consciousness of a mission and a destiny, may and must expand at the expense of weaker neighbours. Niebuhr went further : he maintained that France and Italy were decadent, and that Prussia had a right to annex Schleswig, Holstein, Hanover, and Saxony. The third leading German historian of those days, Leopold von Ranke, became, when he abandoned his early Liberalism, an even more ardent Imperialist. He demanded that all the little German States, including Switzerland, should be absorbed—taken by force, if necessary—by Prussia and Austria.

These are historians of international repute, but there were others in the first half of the nineteenth century who had as deep an influence, or a deeper influence, in Germany, and they developed even more explicitly the principles of Frederic the Great. They are only less known outside Germany because their attention was mainly given to patriotic history, and on that account they had the deeper influence on their countrymen. All of them were historians of high distinction, many of them were also poets, pamphleteers, and politicians ; and from

the leading universities of Germany they inoculated the entire educated community with their ardent Prussianism. From 1840 or 1850 onwards they issued voluminous, vivid, and intensely patriotic histories of Germany, and the language of their lecture-halls would have seemed more appropriate in an Imperialist club. Almost every idea of the later Professor von Treitschke is found in their writings, and hardly one of them had less influence than he.

I will not examine their works at any length, because their ambition was to see the formation of a German Empire out of the disunited German States, and this was accomplished in 1871. But it is most important to realise how they implanted deep in the German mind the idea of expansion by the sword, the right of the powerful to annex the weaker, the lofty mission of Prussia, and a disdain for other peoples. These are the seeds which Treitschke preserved, and for which modern conditions afforded a favourable soil.

The leaders of this Prussian school of historians—only one of them was a Prussian by birth, but they did the work of Prussia—were the eminent professors Droysen, Häusser, and Sybel. Johann Gustav Droysen (1808–1884), of Jena and Berlin, was a distinguished authority on Greece, and he freely insisted that, just as Macedonia had, by founding the Greek Empire, made Christianity possible, so Prussia must found a German Empire

and inaugurate a new golden age for mankind. A graphic and fiery historian, he stamped deep on the minds of his hearers and readers that "it is the historical mission of Prussia to become the German Power." Ludwig Häusser (1818-1867), who taught at Heidelberg, served Prussian history, with white-hot patriotism, to crowded audiences of students, and impressed on larger popular audiences that "Prussia is the nucleus round which the crystal of the German State must grow." His fiery *History of Germany after Frederic the Great*, in four volumes, at once ran through several editions. Heinrich von Sybel (1817-1895), professor at Bonn, won repute as the historian of the French Revolution, and used his opportunity to represent France as corrupt and decadent. Besides his several large histories, each in many volumes, he issued an historical magazine and numerous political pamphlets, and it was one of the aims of his life to urge the Hohenzollerns to snatch the leadership of Europe from France and Austria.

Then there was Professor Dahlmann of Kiel (1785-1860), the tutor of Treitschke, one of the most respected teachers of his time, who held that the old medieval imperial dignity must be revived for the Hohenzollerns, and that a world-mission was divinely imposed on the German people. Ludwig Giesebrrecht (1792-1873), the most eminent professor at Stettin, recalled, in vivid and patriotic lectures, the story of the old empire, and his feelings

overflowed in ardent and popular poems. Wilhelm Menzel (1798-1873), poet and historian of great influence, so hated France that people called him "the Frenchman-eater," and he was one of those who egged Bismarck to annex Alsace and Lorraine. Georg Heinrich Pertz (1795-1876), the Royal Librarian at Berlin and a most learned and weighty historian, wrote endless volumes on the glories of Stein and Gneisenau and other Prussian heroes. W. A. Schmidt, of Jena University, loudly approved and justified the annexation of Schleswig and Holstein in 1864, and demanded the annexation of Alsace and Lorraine in 1870. Paul de Lagarde (1827-1871), one of the most eminent orientalists and most learned writers of his time, demanded, in prose and in fiery verse, that Prussia should use her vigorous sword to enlarge her boundaries (at the expense of her neighbours); and, while Bismarck gravely wondered in 1871 whether he had not taken too much from France, this distinguished savant bitterly complained that he had not taken enough. Philologists like Richard Boeckh assisted the movement by proving the "Germanic" nature of so many small States. As early as 1869 a Pan-German atlas, including Austria, Holland, and Belgium in the ideal Germany, was in popular circulation. Gustav Freytag, Germany's greatest novelist, urged that blood should flow freely in the sacred cause of uniting Germany. Emmanuel Geibel, the most famous and most popular poet of his time

(1815–1884), whose poems had run through a hundred editions before he died, glorified war and aggression with the fire of a medieval bard, and looked forward to a time when the soul of Germany would save the world.

It must be noted that, although many of these historians continued to write long after 1871, their work falls mainly in the period before Treitschke began to teach and before Bernhardi was born. There is no more flagrant or more mischievous an error than the belief that Treitschke and Bernhardi constitute German Imperialism. They are merely two who happen to have become known in England, but Germany had been well prepared for their work. In no other modern nation can one find so persistent and authoritative an education of the people in what are really medieval ideas. Nearly all the historians of Germany took part in it, and, when Bismarck came to power in 1862, he found at his disposal this splendid machinery for inoculating the nation with his ideas. There was then, we must remember, no universal franchise. The middle class ruled : and the middle class was educated by these men. Hence each fresh annexation, each blow at the power of Austria, was hailed with enthusiasm. It was not merely that German professors were servants of the State : until 1866 the situation of Germany was so distressing that few scholars could remain indifferent to its stormy political life.

In 1870 the announcement of war with France

was received with jubilation. The decadent neighbour, the land that had so often sent its triumphant armies over Germany, was to be "bled white as veal." But when the war was over, and the spacious German Empire gathered into its bosom all the detached fragments and principalities, the Imperialist tradition seemed to have reached its term. Bismarck genially pronounced that the age of expansion was over. They had ample territory for their forty million people. Let them grow their corn in peace—provided France did not disturb them. They might return to the native German good-nature and brotherliness. It was then, in 1874, that Heinrich von Treitschke took the chair of political science at Berlin University. Few of his ideas were new, and many must have thought them obsolete in the new position of Germany. Even by 1875, however, France had recovered, and there was very grave talk of war. Men who were in Berlin at the time tell me that extraordinary crowds, men from all sections of Berlin society, pressed with the pupils into Treitschke's lecture-hall. His influence is, perhaps, not unjustly estimated by Professor Cramb as equal to the joint influence in England of Carlyle and Ruskin. His teaching, as far as it concerns me here, is well known. War is an eternal and beneficent part of human life : Germany has a divine mission still further to carry its arms and its *Kultur*.

Treitschke was by no means alone in this teach-

ing. Sybel, DroySEN, and Lagarde were still active, and the works of other earlier Imperialists were read and republished. Other professors maintained the tradition. Professor Maurenbrecher, of Bonn, insisted that (in the closing words of his chief work) Germany must "maintain and *enlarge*, protect and *complete*," its imperial estate; and amongst the pupils of Maurenbrecher was a fiery young prince who would presently be William II. Professor Hans Delbrück, of Berlin, taught the customary disdain of England, and the customary justification of the deeds of Frederic and Bismarck. Professor Felix Dahn, his cousin Professor Ernst Dahn, Baron Detleb von Liliencron (a very popular poet), and others maintained the aggressive strain. But on the whole the period of Treitschke's influence was comparatively sober. Humanitarian ideas spread, as they did in every other country. "Young Germans" listened in large numbers to Nietzsche—it is absurd to pretend that because Nietzsche flayed Germany (as Shaw flays England) he had no influence there—and laughed at Treitschke. It was only in the stress of later days that they discovered how the two masters coincided in teaching aggressiveness and moral scepticism and in disdain of humanitarianism. It has recently been announced by the German book-trade that the third most popular book with the soldiers is Nietzsche's *Thus Spake Zarathustra*.

I have already explained the economic developments which, in the latter part of the nineteenth

century, disposed the German people to listen once more to suggestions of aggressive Imperialism. The population overflowed the confines of Germany, and the stream of exports and imports rose yearly. Bismarck, who had at first been content to secure the position of Germany on land by an alliance with Austria and Italy, was forced to look beyond the seas and obtain colonies. There were now two definite objects for the Imperialists to put before the nation : the building of a great fleet to protect their colonies and commerce and to check England, and the maintenance of a large army, ready to strike at any moment, in face of the growing hostility of France and Russia. Every diplomatic incident was construed as a proof that these older Powers were watching with jealous eyes the rapid advance of Germany, and a defensive aspect was thus easily given to the increasing militarism. Bismarck and the old Emperor William I regarded the new policy with reserve, but at that juncture, in March 1888, William I died. It is well known that the Imperialists and a large proportion of the nation witnessed with deep concern the accession of his liberal and humanitarian son Frederic, who had married a daughter of Queen Victoria, and that, when that promising monarch died three months later, the feeling of relief was almost indecently expressed. William II acceded to the throne on June 15th of the same year, and a new chapter opened in the history of Germany.

The young monarch was, in spite of the dread of his father's humane policy, not greeted with deep and general enthusiasm. It was well known that he was a Hohenzollern of the fighting blood, an able and accomplished young man, with a stern devotion to duty. He had been estranged from his father and mother and sister because of their friendliness to England. From the first he hated England : he was a German patriot of the narrowest type. Further, he notoriously loved the smell of powder. Many had seen him at Bonn quivering with suppressed excitement as he watched the students' duels ; and he was never happier than in the society of officers or on the deck of a cruiser. But the first year or two of his reign threw Germany into a furious underground controversy about him. He was just as much at home with quaint mystics like Count Waldersee as with Prussian officers. He posed as a judge of art and letters : ordered academies to admit pictures of which he approved, or refuse prizes of which he disapproved ; directed operas and designed monuments. He was a tremendous worker, a sober liver ; but he ran restlessly from spot to spot in a luxurious train of a dozen blue and white coaches, carried with him a complete theatrical wardrobe of gorgeous costumes, and made speeches, at every opportunity, on all sorts of subjects in which no Hohenzollern had ever taken an interest.

Worse than all this, he began at once to press

for what is called social legislation of an advanced nature. He would be the "Arbeiter-Kaiser"—the "Emperor of the Workers"—as democratic journals ventured to call him. Bismarck opposed him; and for this, and because of his reserve in naval and colonial matters, the old Chancellor was dismissed with almost indecent haste. Both Conservatives and Liberals now frowned on the new Emperor. Social Democracy was making remarkable progress, and William II seemed, by this zeal for the betterment of the condition of the workers, to foster the sentiments on which it fed. It was an official approval of discontent: his measures, many said, would prove only Bismarck herring to tickle the appetites of the workers. A wave of scorn and anger passed through Germany, especially through the ranks of the Imperialists. Maximilian Harden wrote mockingly, with thin disguise, of the new "*fin-de-siècle* Emperor." The aged Treitschke narrowly missed confinement in a Prussian fortress for writing—with patent application to William II—a deadly satire on the freaks and follies of Frederic William IV and his court. Even in 1893, when I was in daily intercourse with German students, I found them still speaking with disdain of their "gad-about Emperor." As late as 1908, when the Eulenberg scandal sent a shiver through Germany, there were some who wondered whether his position was secure.

Long before that time, however, the German

people understood William II, and accepted him, with all his foibles, as the God-sent Hohenzollern for their age. He said in later years that the only men who understood and clung to him in the early years of trial were the military and naval officers. I venture to think, since he often made private speeches to groups of officers and officials, that he from the first unfolded his policy to these, and they approved. No doubt it is reserved for some future historian to pass a definitive verdict on the character and policy of William II, but a patient examination of all that we do authoritatively know about him seems to make them broadly intelligible.

The modern psychologist tells us that genius consists in the union of a fertile imagination, a copious flow of ideas, with a firm and sagacious judgment. In proportion as the former element is enhanced and the second weakened, the genius approaches the confines of insanity. William II is neither a genius nor insane, but the analysis is pertinent. In fertility of imagination he approaches the genius, and this gift is unhappily associated with—indeed it springs from—a nervous instability which forbids him to be either a great general or a great statesman. His charm of manner and conversation, his occasional impulsive outbursts (almost necessitating a department of State to undo his utterances), his use of morphia, his romantic and melodramatic poses, his restlessness, his nervous energy of will (a totally different psychic quality

from the will of Bismarck), his known diseases, all cohere with this nervous instability. In such a character we may expect fluctuations and, in time of crisis, excesses, but the evidence seems to suggest that William II mounted the throne with a definite policy and has pursued it to this day.

His zeal for social reform and for religion was a plain political device. His chief duty was "to help the weak and oppressed," he said in his first imperial speech. We may recall that, when he was Crown Prince, he had talked of "bringing back the masses to a respect for authority and love of the monarchy," and that he had hardly been twelve months on the throne when he predicted that the Social Democrats would presently be plundering Berlin and the burghers would summon *him*—obviously with "a whiff of grape-shot." He would secure the body of the proletariat by concessions, then crush the rebels. He needed a united Germany. His zeal for religion he repeatedly represented as a conviction that religion was an indispensable basis of unity and guarantee of obedience. He at once arrested all persecution of Catholics and paid great deference to the Pope. "Our two religions" were to work harmoniously—for the check of rebellious ideas. He was very familiar with the lives of Frederic the Great and Napoleon; and undoubtedly he aspired to be the third member of a trinity with those more eminent adventurers.

The work of pacifying rebellious workers and

Catholics went more slowly than he had anticipated, and the Junkers and Bismarckians and capitalists remained sullen and critical. Bismarck and his journalists galled him with their sneers, but he went resolutely onward. Toward the close of 1890 he summoned forty-five education authorities to a conference at Berlin. They were, he said in his opening speech, which is reproduced by Klaussmann (*Kaiserreden*, 1902), to "adapt our growing youth to the actual needs and world-position of our country." They had called their object a *Schulenquête*: they must call it the *Schulfrage*. In fact, the speech outlined and imposed on them the "reform" they were to discuss. The Emperor scorned their Latin and Greek. The German language and German history were to be the main part of the curriculum: teachers were to tell boys about Sedan and Gravelotte instead of Thermopylæ and Cannæ; in history and geography lessons "the national element" must be emphasised: modern history must be taught in such a way as to disgust the young with "revolutionary ideas"; and, finally, they were to build less schools and to take a number of hours from the intellectual training and assign them to the drill-sergeant and "an officer from the nearest barracks." Some of the leading professors of Germany protested against this prostitution of the school, but they had not the least influence. A "cabinet-order" of April 1, 1892, informed the Minister of Public Instruction

that these reforms were approved, that the Emperor relied on his "patriotism" to carry them out, and that he must make a monthly report of progress to the Emperor. Since that date the schools of Germany have been employed chiefly for the glorification of Germany and the preparation of boys for military service. Mr. Ellis Barker quotes (*Fortnightly Review*, vol. xci. p. 449) a little book written for school use in 1909. It informs the pupils that the inhabitants of Britain could be starved into subjection in six weeks by a blockade, and it insists on the German need of a big navy.

The Emperor then turned to the naval policy, which I need not follow in detail. Before he put forward any large scheme of naval construction he secured Heligoland from England (1890) and made the Kiel Canal (opened in 1895). On January 3, 1896, he astonished the world by sending his historic telegram to President Kruger, in which he congratulated the Boers on maintaining their position "without needing to appeal for the aid of friendly Powers." Count Reventlow (*Deutschlands auswärtige Politik*, 1914, pp. 74-80) has recently disclosed that this telegram was not due to the Emperor's impulsiveness, as many think. It was composed, in the presence of the Emperor and four of his councillors, by Baron von Marschall, Secretary of State. Count Reventlow's apology for it not only explains nothing, but is more provocative than the telegram itself. Germans, he says, felt

justified in giving advice to fellow-Teutons, because they innocently believed that England would proceed legally, with due regard to treaties. When, he continues, England showed that she regarded treaties as "paper obstacles," and that she would "find her way to power by the devices of power," public opinion in Germany became "full of the greatest bitterness against and the liveliest distrust of everything English." Was that the real aim of this deliberate and carefully-composed telegram?

The Emperor was meantime pressing for a large navy. There was formidable opposition in the Reichstag, and in January 1895 the Emperor had invited a large number of deputies to dinner, and had, before they tasted the soup, delivered to them a two hours' speech, assisted by maps and drawings, on the need for a large navy; so, again, Count Reventlow discloses. By 1897 and 1898 Germany was fully devoted to its naval competition with England. A Navy League, rising to a membership of more than a million, distributed pamphlets, lecturers, and bioscopic views over the whole of Germany. A very large Pan-German League sent into every town and village a coincident stream of literature, lecturers, and bioscopic views. A Colonial Society pressed the same object from its point of view; and a General German School-Union, which received a subsidy from the Government, spent vast sums in maintaining the German speech and ideals of the children of those who settled in

America. The South African War brought into existence a League of Sympathy with the Boers, which sent two million marks to South Africa and drenched Germany with the bitterest anti-British literature. Fritz Bley, a popular novelist and political writer, a pamphleteer of these leagues, wrote a little work entitled *The Boers in the Service of Mankind*, in which the deep corruption of England and the horrible outrages committed by her troops were contrasted with the exalted Germanic virtues of the Boers, "the deliverers of the world from the yoke of England." He entreated Germans, "by the God of German history," to sharpen their weapons and realise that "Germany is the morning star that rises over England's fading glory."

It is foolish to ignore this "popular" literature. It is the literature that the millions read. Bley's vicious pamphlets went from edition to edition, and scores of other Pan-German writers and lecturers urged the same amiable doctrine. But more distinguished men were, if less strident in language, encouraging the same sentiments. University professors (servants of the State) were enlisted everywhere in the big-navy campaign. In 1900 the professors of Berlin University delivered, and published in two volumes, which passed through several editions, a series of lectures on the subject. Professors Schmoller, Lamprecht, Voigt, Sering, Wagner, Von Halle, and Schumacher pleaded for the familiar "place in the sun" (several of them

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use that phrase), "position in proportion to Germany's might and dignity," "world-policy," and so on. Professor Erich Marks, of Munich, wrote a pamphlet on *England and Germany*, in which he insisted that Germany "must and will expand." Professor Hans Delbrück, editor of the official *Prussian Year-Book*, gave his weighty authority to the current fables of British atrocities in South Africa.

In short, Germany was saturated with Imperialist and anti-English literature between 1900 and 1914. The flood of war-literature rose (says Professor Cramb) to seven hundred books and pamphlets a year. As the fever increased, weird books like Houston Stewart Chamberlain's *Foundations of the Nineteenth Century*, setting forth that appalling German creed which I gave at the beginning of this chapter, found hundreds of thousands of readers. Chamberlain's work went through ten editions, and was supported in its most ludicrous and most arrogant pretensions (the Germanism of Jesus Christ, Dante, Michael Angelo, &c.) by equally expensive and imposing works written by scientific men like Dr. Ludwig Woltmann, Professor J. L. Reimer, and Dr. Ludwig Wilser. A quite large and influential group of writers set themselves to prove the immense superiority over all others of the Germanic race, and its mission to regenerate humanity ; while Privy Councillor Dahn, Professor Delbrück, Dr. P. Rohrbach, Dr. von

Wenckstern, Dr. C. Müller, Baron von der Goltz, Prince Bülow, Count Reventlow, and others I have named or might name, assisted in the "education" of Germany. The generation which is fighting to-day came out of schools such as I have described into a world saturated with this literature.

The Emperor, meantime, made edifying speeches on the peaceful intentions of Germany. In 1902, in a solemn speech at Aachen, he assured the world that Germans no longer needed "to extend the frontiers of our country," and that the only world-empire they desired was "a spiritual empire": it was the last period of coquetry between England and Germany. In 1908 he granted an interview to the *Daily Telegraph* (October 28th), in the course of which he sought to prove his friendship for England by revealing that he had sent to Queen Victoria a plan for the South African campaign, and that, against the sentiment of his people, he had refused to join France and Russia in calling upon England to stop the war. Count Muravieff has since disclosed that the Emperor refused only when France and Russia refused to guarantee him, as a condition, the secure possession of Alsace and Lorraine; and one may recall that his representatives at the Hague Conference in 1907 were the gravest obstacles to the advance of the cause of peace. But we may easily admit that he did not then want war. With France, Russia, and England drawing nearer to

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each other, with Austria weak and Italy unreliable, the hazard of war was grave. One must await one of those fortunate conjunctions of circumstances and preparations of which it was the recognised Prussian policy to take advantage.

Dr. Holland Rose has so ably demonstrated, in his *Origins of the War*, how such a conjunction occurred in 1914 that I will be content to refer to him. Germany's interference in Morocco in 1911 really failed. The appeals of German merchants for protection had been inspired from Berlin, and the Foreign Secretary, Herr von Kiderlen-Wächter, told the President of the Pan-German League that it was the Government's intention to secure part of Morocco: as afterwards transpired in open court. The failure gave an enormous impulse to the Pan-German League, the Navy League, and all the other Imperialist organisations, and soldiers like Bernhardi found it possible to publish the full program of *Germany's Next War*. Bernhardi's book is a symptom, not a cause, of the mood of his country: it is chiefly valuable as an indication of the miscalculations (as to the strength of England, Russia, and Turkey) which emboldened Germany. The illuminating dispatches of M. Cambon from Berlin in 1913 (given in the French *Diplomatic Correspondence*) enforce these miscalculations, and show that Germany was bent on war: that the Emperor had "ceased to be the friend of peace"—let us say,

ceased to profess to be the friend of peace—and that public feeling was overwhelmingly in favour of war. In 1914 there occurred the desired conjunction of favourable circumstances, a more promising conjunction for Germany than any that could be foreseen, and, as I briefly argued in the introduction, Germany precipitated war, the whole nation supporting the action of its ruler and statesmen.

I am concerned only to reconcile the earlier moral traits of the German character with the aggression, the disregard of treaties, and the endorsement of atrocities. The outrages on merchant ships and on the civilian population of English towns would suffice to justify the latter phrase, but it is hardly probable, after the frank avowals of the very authoritative *Kölnische Zeitung* (February 10th), that any will now doubt that grave outrages were committed in Belgium. My last task is to show that what I have described as German character is consistent with this conduct. It is not enough to say, with Flaubert, that "la guerre rend bête": for the entire German people approved the war before they were stirred by its elemental passions. It is not enough to cast on intoxicated peasants the responsibility of foul deeds done: for the most distinguished savants, far from the field, have approved grave outrages, and some of those outrages on the field (such as the destruction of Louvain) were perpetrated systematically by regiments which were largely composed

of university students. It is not enough to ask that charity shall cast its mantle over all that has occurred : for the sternest task of Europe is to ensure that it shall not recur.

As far as the Emperor is concerned, the psychological problem is not very complex. It was his task to sustain the tradition of the greater Hohenzollerns, and he came to preside over a Germany which needed expansion and could secure it only by the sword. So he unsheathed the sword. From the greatest historians of his country he learned that it is a natural law and a legitimate procedure for a strong nation to expand by force of arms : for the ageing and decadent older nations to be thrust off the stage. It was the turn of Germany. It is not impossible that, until three years ago, he dallied with the modern sentiment of expansion by means of intellectual and commercial superiority. But it seems far more probable that his twenty-five years of peace were merely twenty-five years of preparation for war. How should a man who forced his officers to take the sword in defence of their honour, hesitate to take the sword in defence of his country's honour ? He brought medieval ideals into the twentieth century. Along the line of German history he saw, most clearly of all, the clash of swords and the glitter of armour and the glory of the victor. When the war was over, when he controlled half the world, he would help men to

rise to higher levels, do battle with irreligion, foster art and science, perhaps turn swords into ploughshares. We know not what iridescent dreams fascinated his romantic mind. . . . In more prosy hours he meditated that the economic burden of his armaments was intolerable, and must be lightened by a successful war: that Socialism advanced, in spite of all his efforts, and war alone would unite the people: that a vast indemnity would furnish resources for his grandest schemes: that the finest colonies of the world were the prizes of *this* war: that the manufacturers and soldiers about him demanded war, and were casting curious glances at his bellicose son. So he made the great venture.

As to the German people, the long and persistent education I have described largely accounts for their aberration. This generation has been soaked in pernicious literature, partly provided by fanatics, partly by interested merchants, manufacturers, and soldiers. One need not suppose that any very large section of the German people were deluded by Treitschke's or Bernhardi's ludicrous praise of war as a highly moral agency instituted by Providence, or by their assurance that moral law did not apply to nations. The sober thought in their minds was that, as they were taught, their beloved and prosperous land was surrounded by jealous and criminally-minded enemies. Their wonderful prosperity was threatened by a combination of the barbaric Slav, the decadent Frenchman, and the perfidious

Englishman. From the university chair to the rural journal that was the cry. They were at least being cheated of their share of the globe, their place in the sun : so many of the most eminent scholars of the country assured them, and the assurance was carried by the Leagues to every village of Germany. On this assurance they shouldered the burden of the great army and the great fleet. This, I say, was the sober thought in the general German mind, but it was bent and confused by the hundred less sober appeals of that copious literature I have described. Being fully prepared for a "defensive" war, they were in large part won to the idea of a "preventive" war. Nearly all believed by 1912 that war was "inevitable." When people believe that a particular reform is inevitable, its chances are ruined ; but when they regard a war as inevitable, it becomes inevitable. Stones roll downhill, but not uphill, of themselves. So, the war being inevitable, why not follow the philosophy of the great Frederic, which all their political moralists approved, and choose the hour of battle ? Preventive war is an aggressive war hypocritically dressed in modern garments of an ethical cut. Meantime the Leagues and the professors were stamping their theses on the German mind : the superiority of the German, the mission of the race, the loss of 600,000 precious sons each year, the absolute need of more land, the fact that every civilisation had thus expanded, and so on.

There was nothing like it in any other modern civilisation : there was neither the same apparent need of expansion nor anything remotely approaching the mighty educative agency which controlled Germany for nearly twenty years. The little group of English pamphleteers who have set out to defend Germany, by denying that it did what it notoriously did, show not even an elementary knowledge of that nation's psychological education and development. By 1913—Italian statesmen have revealed that there was question of precipitating the war by an attack on Serbia in that year—the nation was substantially reconciled with the idea of war. There had set in those vague but very real collective impulses toward agreement which M. le Bon describes in his *Psychology of the Crowd*. Still the native integrity and humanity of the people—I claim only so much of these qualities as other normal peoples possess—were not wholly blinded by the incipient war-passion, and, when the hour struck, when the favourable conjunction of circumstances at last occurred, the war-mongers had further recourse to the approved philosophy of Frederic and Bismarck and William II. A little diplomatic rhetoric : a little lying about perfidious England : a little emphasis on the barbaric Slav—and the whole nation, including Socialists who had sung the *Internationale* for twenty years, thronged to decorate the trains which bore their sons to the grave.

A little more lying and a little more diplomatic rhetoric, and they agreed to “hack their way through”—through every barrier set up by modern civilisation. Those who seek to vindicate the German people, and to prepare the way for future co-operation, ought not frivolously and ignorantly to deny facts. They should insist rather on a precise establishment of the facts ; insist on a stern arraignment of the men who warped the judgment of the nation and made it belie its character, and of the military leaders who imposed on the soldiers the doctrine of spreading terror. Let me relate a strange coincidence. Lecturing in London on February 14th, I severely criticised a batch of journals and pamphlets which foolishly sought to exonerate Germany. A week later the *Daily Chronicle* (February 22nd) published a verbatim translation of an article in which the *Kölnische Zeitung* (February 10th), one of the most authoritative of German dailies, fully and defiantly admitted the foul deeds done in Belgium, and justified them, partly by the current official lies, and chiefly by the horrible “theory of terrifying.” There was the familiar “discovery” of documents which proved that England and France were about to march through Belgium : there was a weird picture of “the civilian population,” at the Belgian frontier, “lying in wait for us, with muskets ready to fire,” and the consequent demoralisation of our “carefully instructed and disciplined soldiers” : there

was a naïve assurance that “*women and children* were not touched except when they were found with arms in their hands” : and there was a cold-blooded statement that it was in accord with the rules of war to burn towns and shoot “a few representatives” of the population when the guilty could not be detected. Thus were the German people at large reconciled to atrocities. Every stroke was a counter-stroke : every stroke was approved by learned divines and learned jurists. The people were convinced that they were struggling against enemies who ignored every law and convention of civilised war. Was not the Slav a barbarian ? Was not France thoroughly corrupt ? Had not England done all these things in the South African War ?

Less simple is the psychological problem of the German soldier. These men, who but a few months before had impressed foreigners with their geniality and good-nature and domestic affection in the various provinces of Germany, have behaved worse than any soldiers in the field, except Turkish irregulars, since the close of the Middle Ages. Two things are clear : first, that by no means all were guilty, and, secondly, that they were officially directed to commit outrages. Indeed, apart from excesses committed during intoxication or by the coarser soldiers whom the blood-trade itself intoxicates, the chief cause of the black trail across Belgium and France and Poland of murder, rape,

and theft is the official military theory of "terrifying" (*Abshrecken*). For this, for the appalling official mendacity, and for the deliberate official doctrine of overruling moral law in case of need, the civilised world will surely order a reckoning.

War is still war, in the souls of men. Will any man ever again dare to chant its praises? "What moral perversity it is to wish to strike militarism out of the heart of man!" So said Berlin's most distinguished professor only a few years after the Franco-German War had left just such a trail of blood and tears over the fields of France. Perhaps this is the last time. Defeat may teach wisdom where victory increases folly. If my analysis is correct, there is ground for hope. The German people were not dragged into war, or duped into consenting to war; though in the later phases, when chivalry was flung aside and red passion ruled, they were officially and horribly duped. Perhaps they will learn the folly of their teachers and the crime of their deceivers. Perhaps, if the settlement be both wise and firm, they will tear to shreds all this Pan-German glorification of their race, this praise of war and hatred, this academic lying about the laws of history, this specious pleading of soldiers and manufacturers, and become again a people boasting of its *Gemüthlichkeit*, its honour, and its bloodless triumphs in the fields of art and science, industry and commerce.

CHAPTER II

THE THREE RACES OF AUSTRIA-HUNGARY

Austria as a colony of aged gentlefolk—The early peopling of the Danube plains and making of the Empire—Character-studies of the Austrian, the Slav, the Magyar, and the Ruman—Pride and fall of Austria—Career and character of Francis Joseph—His ambition in the Balkans—The struggle of the Slavs for national life—Corrupt repression by Austria and Hungary—Attempts at judicial murder of Serbs and Croats—the Slavs combine and Francis Joseph joins the great adventure—Attitude of the people on the war—The future of the Empire.

FOLLOWING the Danube valley from Bavaria into Austria, one does not need any learned assurance of science or history that one is still amongst the same people, though one has crossed the frontier of another nation. Here is the last stage of German character. In the far north we noted chiefly the marks of sturdy and ambitious adolescence. There was assuredly much boasting of things done, but they were things of recent date, the presage of greater things to come. In central Germany we found a character fresh, genial, and robust, young in its native strength and its frank enjoyment of life, but not fired by any towering ambition or any sense of a great task. In Bavaria we seemed to meet the middle-aged German: a man who had never staked his life on any hazardous ambition, who would, if he were left to his kindly

impulses, welcome the world to sit in peace under his elms. When you pursue your journey into Austria, you fancy that you meet the German of sobered age and disillusioned mind. There is even more enjoyment of life than in Bavaria—it is an Austrian writer who remarks that Austria unites the soul of a child with that of an old man. Yet there is a distinct impression of a man who has played his part in the larger affairs of life and now rests on his estate amidst the crumbling memorials of his old achievements, the pride of power subdued by the consciousness of its loss. He was once master of Europe.

I remember sharing a conversation on the essence of poetry with a distinguished noble of the Vienna Court and Sir Lewis Morris. As I observed the quietly genial, gravely courteous, demeanour of the Count—entirely patrician, yet more deferential than that of the democratic poet—pictures of Rome in the autumnal days of Symmachus and Flavian dimly floated before my mind : fragments of the imaginary conversation which Macrobius has left us as the noblest picture of the last generation of Roman gentleman.

I have already disavowed the belief that nations grow old and die. If that belief were just, we might easily explain Austria-Hungary to ourselves as a colony of decaying gentlefolk. There is, in the north, Bohemia, once one of the most promising and energetic peoples of Central Europe,

now a nation slumbering in the great valley between its vast screen of mountains or, like the Spaniard or the Irishman, displaying energy only in futile outpours of political rhetoric. In the eastern valley, or group of plains and valleys, is Hungary, which in the Middle Ages attracted the eyes of Europe by the sheen of its armour and the valour of its deeds. In the western plains and valleys, between the Alps and the Carpathians, is Austria, whose name will be found on every great page of European history for the last six hundred years.

One imagines them, as I said, to be a quiet colony of retired gentlefolk, which the winds of the world ought to respect. And it is true, in a sense, that they have grown aged and feeble ; but not in the sense that there is some inner law of decay which gradually lowers the frame of a nation as it does that of an individual. Leave a people to the free action of nature's laws and it will grow stronger. It is not natural selection, but human selection, that favours the survival of the weak. War braces warriors—not the nation, as some say, but its warriors ; and it braces them only that they may be offered in finer condition on its altars. The blood of Austria's strongest sons sinks torpidly into its soil to-day. So it sank a thousand years, even two thousand years, ago, and has sunk every few years since the Celt battled with the Roman for the ownership of the fertile fields by the Danube. Half a century ago it was the war with Italy and

Prussia : a little earlier the terrible struggle with Napoleon : earlier still the Seven Years' War, and the Thirty Years' War, and so on into the mists of early history. A nation does not *grow* feeble : it enfeebles itself by sacrificing its strongest sons, its healthiest breeders. Disease passes by the strong and takes the weak : war chooses the strong and leaves the feebler to make the next generation. Through that humanly-devised sieve the peoples of Austria, Hungary, and Bohemia have passed many times in each of the last ten centuries.

A nation withstands this enfeebling agency and maintains its strength, as a rule, by bringing within its bounds fresh young populations that will supply its armies. Take the Roman Empire. The Roman people had virtually perished before the Empire was founded : the great corn-lands round the city, which had furnished its sturdy legionaries, were falling desolate. The first Emperor was not a Roman, and few of the later Emperors of any distinction were even Italians. By the fourth century the troops were largely "barbarians," commanded by barbarian officers. German historians, and many other historians, have been too apt to dwell on the early stages of empire-making, when the strong arm and the long spear brought home the spoils of the world, and the enriched capital blossomed into art and culture. The story of the decline of empires is less popular, yet more instructive.

It may seem that Austria and Hungary have

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appreciated the law of national recovery. They have flung their frontiers wider and wider, and have embraced in their empire millions of members of a more virile race. Of the fifty million people of the Dual Monarchy about one half are neither Austrian nor Hungarian. There are eight million Bohemians, Moravians, and Slovaks ; eight million Poles and Ruthenes ; four million Rumanians and Latins ; five million Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes. But here is precisely the psychological and political problem of Austria-Hungary. The Empire was, at the time when it annexed most of these peoples, just strong enough to annex and not strong enough to assimilate : too inflated with old pride to grant federation and too weak to extinguish nationalism. The two master peoples are themselves entirely dissimilar in character, and their smouldering hostility is checked only by a consciousness of common interest or common peril. And the twenty million Slavs and four million Slav-Latins or Slav-Turks hate both the Austrians and the Magyars, and regard their inclusion in the Empire as a perpetual memorial of their humiliation. Britain has experienced the strain of keeping an alien people under its control ; but the people of Ireland count only four and a half million in a total of forty-five millions, and their feeling toward England to-day is cordial in comparison with that of most of the Czechs and Serbs toward Austria and Hungary. So fierce and indomitable is their

resistance that a project of converting the Dual into a Trial Monarchy is discussed ; yet, even if it were realised, the three peoples would continue to look on each other with suspicion and disdain, and there would still be millions lying entirely outside the monarchic prestige of Germans, Magyars, and Slavs.

We had some difficulty in discovering the much-vaunted soul of Germany, but, by a sacrifice of the Poles, whose province is a discordant annex to the Empire, the search was not wholly fruitless. Most certainly there is no soul of Austria-Hungary. Paul de Lagarde, the learned Prussian patriot whom I quoted in the last chapter, said that, while the soul of Germany was too large for its body, the body of Austria was too large for its soul. But Lagarde, being a German, ignored any other than the German-Austrian soul. To-day we have half a dozen national souls, usually hostile to each other, in the Empire, and as yet there seems little prospect of ever fusing into one harmonious nation the fifty million Germans, Magyars, Slavs, Wallachs, Latins, and Jews who are scattered over its enormous area. There is no concentrative force like the Pan-Germanic ideal of the northern Empire. Recent writers who believe in the persistence or unification of Austria are content to suggest that the dynasty is a centre of attraction—which we will dispute—or that the interest of other countries requires the maintenance of this imperial mosaic :

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that, in the famous phrase, "if Austria did not exist, it would be necessary to invent her." These are strange and frail foundations for a nation ; and the strain they have to bear is greater than in any other country. Beyond the encircling hills are, as it were, great magnets, which pull asunder the elements of the Empire : Germany, Poland, Rumania, Serbia, Italy. There remain the Czechs and the Magyars, but they are attracted neither to each other nor to any other nation. If there is anywhere in the world a call of the blood, it is in Austria-Hungary : and it calls, not to unite, but to disperse.

Religious differences and sombre memories of persecution intensify the centrifugal forces. In that area raged the appalling struggle of Catholic and Protestant in the seventeenth century. Imagine what the state of Ireland would be to-day if the Protestants of the north had, in addition to their fears, a memory of a time when the southern Catholics had, with every circumstance of medieval brutality, wrecked their civilisation and destroyed millions of their children. It is with such a tragic memory as this that Bohemia and Moravia look down from the northern hills on the master peoples of the plains. Nor can they find consolation in the thought of union with their brother Slavs. Can the ruined noble share the hopes and interests of the serfs among whom the accidents of life have cast him ? To the Bohemian the southern Slavs

—he is not unfriendly with the Poles—are little more than barbaric ; and, although fierce persecution robbed him of his old religion, he regards his remote cousins as superstitious and priest-ridden. Indeed, these other Slavs of the south and east are separated from each other by fences of religious hostility. Greek Catholic and Greek Orthodox fling anathema at each other, and Mohammedan Slavs look upon both with fiery scorn.

To understand Austria-Hungary—to realise how such diverse peoples came to live side by side in its mighty area (the second largest in Europe) yet seem unable to mingle in one nation—you have to glance at its wonderful history. First look at a map of the country. Austria and Hungary proper are a series of plains, with a fringe of valleys running between the lower spurs of the environing mountains. The stately Danube and the rivers from the vast circle of hills keep them fresh and fruitful : the massive screen of the Carpathians seems designed to shelter them from the north-east winds : the Sudetes and Alps and lower Balkans, rising in places to the region of perpetual snow, prolong the screen almost entirely round the country : the rich, light soil, warmed over a great area by the southern sun, gives ample return for the easy labour of man. Every variety of climate is found at the various levels of valley and hill and mountain. It is at once the land of the palm and the pine ; of the vigorous mountaineer and

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the careless peasant of the orange-orchards by the southern sea. There is, too, a magnificent hoard of minerals in the bowels of the mountains. But it is precisely this central and sheltered position, this natural wealth, which have made Austria-Hungary one of the great battle-fields of Europe.

When the history of Europe opens, we find a broad-faced, thick-set people, with grey eyes and light chestnut hair, with coarse woven stuffs and agriculture and skill in working metals, spread over the plains and valleys. This is the original basis of the population: the Celtic or central branch of the European race. The name of the Danube is one of the permanent traces of their tenure. We find them struggling against the fur-clad Teutons who pour down from Germany through the open valley of the Danube, against Slavs from the north-east, and against the iron-clad legions which come across the lower Alps from Rome. The higher culture of the Romans prevailed, the land was largely civilised, and great numbers of Italian colonists were brought to mingle with the population. But as Rome grew weaker, and its fence of spears grew thinner, the Teutons advanced.

The Danube is at once the pride and the weakness of Austria. The valleys by which it enters and leaves the country are open gates, tempting the ambition of neighbours: they tempted the Huns and Goths of long ago, and they tempt the

Slavs and Germans to-day. During several centuries the tall, blue-eyed Goths and Vandals streamed through the western gate ; and the fierce, yellow-skinned, wiry little Huns, the horsemen of the great west-Siberian plains, rode in myriads through the eastern gate. The Celts were destroyed or driven to the hills, where the scientific man, examining skulls and eyes and hair, finds traces of them to-day. The central plains bore a mixed population of Teutons, Celts, and Asiatics : mixed in the middle region, at least, with Teutons to the west, and Huns in the east. In the sixth century new floods poured in : the truculent Lombards from the west, and the even more truculent, yellow-skinned Avars, another migration from the Caspian and the Asiatic steppes, from the east. But the Slavs also were now moving, and in the sixth century a vast body of them broke like a wave on the mass of the Carpathians. Some went north, and poured into Bohemia and Moravia, and even far into central Germany : some entered the eastern gate, and spread over the Balkans and over what is now the south of Austria-Hungary : some trickled through the passes of the Carpathians and settled on the fringe of the plains. Then the Franks in turn passed along the western valley, and in the eighth century Charlemagne, importing a fresh German colony from Bavaria, made a settled State or frontier-province, as a bulwark of his kingdom against the Asiatics, of the area which is

now known as Upper Austria. He called it the Ost-Mark (Eastern March), and it came in time to be known as the Ost-Reich or Oesterreich, which is, in Latin, Austria.

Such were the modest beginning of Austria and the peopling of the great territory it was one day to rule. The enormously greater part of the country was still unsettled, and in the ninth century the Magyars, a third wave of the west-Asiatic (or, in scientific language, the Finno-Ugrian) race, poured through the eastern valley and through the passes of the lower Carpathians upon the fertile plains. The Hungarian resents the common practice of describing his ancestors as eastern barbarians : he hints at survivals of ancient Persian culture which they had picked up during their long march to their new European home. However that may be, the Magyar horsemen were as much dreaded in Europe as the Huns had been. We find Pope John X inviting them to help him against his enemies in Italy, and they spread terror as far as the walls of Rome. Over and over again they broke through the Austrian bulwark and devastated the west. They settled in time on the rich triangular plain which is the heart of modern Hungary, but to this day they are as remote in blood from the Austrians as the Finns, their cousins, are from the Russians. The Slavs still held Bohemia and Moravia and the southern valleys, where some of them (the Rumanians)

mingled with the later Turks. In the south-west the Latin language and much Latin blood remained.

So far the story of Austria seems to be the record of a great fusion which we might expect to produce a new and vigorous nation. It is the later history that hardens the three dominant races and keeps them apart. The preservation of small nationalities is not an indisputable virtue. But there can be no dispute to-day that the violent obliteration of small nationalities by ambitious Powers is a gross procedure, and is the surest means of inflaming their patriotism. This has been the sin of Austria ; and its action became all the more violent, and more productive of bitterness, when, Christianity having fallen into three Churches, it flattered itself that it sought to impose a religious unity for *their* good, rather a political unity for its own good.

In the twelfth century the East March became the Duchy (later Archduchy) of Austria, and in the thirteenth it fell, with Styria and Carinthia, to a brave and astute Burgundian adventurer, Rudolph of Hapsburg. From master of a single castle Rudolph became master of the Roman Empire, and when Ottocar of Bohemia, who had annexed Austria and Styria, opposed his election, he took Austria and Styria from him, and gave the duchies to his sons. Bohemia (with Moravia) remained an independent and flourishing kingdom, but the Germans were again pushing eastward through Bavaria. It

was now a rivalry of culture, and the Bohemians were at that time one of the most cultured peoples of Europe. There was close intercourse between the universities of Prague and Oxford, and the works of Wicklif were much read in Bohemia. The Czech divines—men like John Hus and Jerome of Prague—were the real initiators of that moral and intellectual movement which issued in the Reformation : the Germans were their chief opponents. The savage treatment by the Church and Empire of their great religious leaders only embittered the Bohemians and Moravians, and when, in 1438, the Duke of Austria obtained, through marriage, the crowns of Bohemia and Hungary, as well as the dignity of Emperor, the prospect was dark. Hungary was less advanced in culture, but it had established a powerful and promising kingdom.

The Duchy of Austria had, as the fourteenth-century legend of William Tell reminds us, already given proof of ambition and tyranny, and the subject kingdoms soon rebelled. But in the fifteenth century the fourth great wave of Asiatic barbarism, the Turks, broke through the open space between the Carpathians and the Balkans, and it fell to Hungary and Bohemia to defend the cross against the crescent. Their heroic struggle wore down their strength, and made them disposed for a new alliance with Austria. The Hapsburgs swore that they would respect the national characters of the kingdoms, but they began at once to attempt to

“Germanise” them, and spirited rebellions led to a further loss of strength. In the first half of the seventeenth century they were finally conquered, and from that time remained under the control of Austria.

The continuous misconduct of Austria, which by the end of the seventeenth century became the greatest and proudest Power in Europe, has kept the three peoples apart and filled Bohemia and Hungary with bitter memories. Austria, we must remember, was not an Empire, but an Archduchy in the Holy Roman Empire, until 1804. The Emperor had a special dynastic attachment to Austria, but his sway extended from Belgium to Italy, and he was, as a rule, more flattered by the subjection of a dozen nations than eager to undertake the difficult work of forming them into one nation. The usual policy, as far as the nearer territories were concerned, was to attract the richer nobles to Vienna and denationalise them by marriage. The peasantry were ruled by the sabre of the hussar. Even Hungary, therefore, though it remained one in religion with Austria, lived apart in sullen hostility, brooding over its ancient records of heroism, at least until the Compromise of 1867.

The fate of Bohemia and Moravia was worse. When Ferdinand II conquered the resistance of Bohemia in 1621, he swore to tolerate Protestantism and to respect its nationality. With the revolting casuistry of the time the Papal Legate absolved him

from his promise, and the Jesuits swarmed into the country and instigated the most intolerable coercion. The war was renewed—in fact, it was drawn out into that long series of battles and atrocities which historians call the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648)—and Bohemia became the battle-ground of Protestant and Catholic princes. Between the horrors of a ferocious war and the fearful persecution which followed their defeat the Bohemians and Moravians were utterly exhausted. Bohemia found its 30,000 prosperous villages reduced to 6000, its population of 3,000,000 reduced to 780,000. The distinguished culture of the country, so closely allied with its efforts to reform religion, was entirely destroyed. Thirty thousand families exiled themselves rather than submit to the creed of their persecutors—from one of these families Heinrich von Treitschke descended—and the dungeon and the sword extinguished whatever courage and independent thought remained in the little country. Then plague fell on the enfeebled people, in 1681, and carried off a further hundred thousand. German and Austrian Catholics streamed in to possess the vacant and forfeited lands, and the faith for which Bohemians had suffered was almost obliterated. The memory of that awful page of their history will never fade from the mind of the Czechs. To-day, when they are restoring their old culture and regaining their pride in John Hus, they look down from their northern valleys on Austrians and

Magyars with renewed bitterness. They brood, a people apart, over the relics of their great medieval literature and civilisation.

Some of the smaller Germanic provinces on the Alpine side have their share of that sombre memory of the days of Ferdinand II and Ferdinand III, but we may go on to ask what memory the Poles have of their incorporation into the Empire. In the latter part of the seventeenth century a Hungarian Protestant, Tekeli, raised a successful revolt, and the Magyar rebels swept over Austria and besieged Vienna. It was a Polish army under John Sobieski who then saved the capital of Austria and flung back the Magyars and Turks. Hungary sank deeper into exhaustion and subjection, and the pride and power of Austria rose. At length the hour of decline came, and Austria lost province after province of its vast Empire. It was forced to surrender Alsace to France, Silesia to Prussia, and a large part of Italy to Spain and Sardinia. The Emperor Charles VI and his able daughter, Maria Theresa, learned moderation and conciliated their subjects—Maria Theresa owed her throne to the swords of the Hungarians—but the Seven Years' War further weakened Austria. She then, to find compensation for her losses, took part in the infamous partition of Poland, and another vast fragment of an alien race, another people brooding over memories of a lost civilisation, was added to the motley Empire. In fact, this addition was the most

unnatural of all, as Galicia lay beyond the natural frontier of the Carpathians and belonged essentially to the Russian plain. It was less than a century since Sobieaki had saved Vienna, the Poles reflected.

Maria Theresa's son, Joseph II, put an end to the clerical dictation which had so long perverted the policy of Austria and embittered its subjects, but he unhappily resorted to political instead of religious tyranny and renewed the attempt to Germanise the dependent kingdoms. The conflict with Napoleon put an end for a time to these aims, and the Empire—now entitling itself the Empire of Austria—lost Belgium and Lombardy, and suffered a terrible strain upon its prestige and resources. But the reaction after 1815 provided an excellent opportunity for that remarkable statesman Prince Metternich, and Austria became the leader in the fierce policy of persecution by which the restored monarchs checked the struggles of democracy. In Venice and Lombardy, which the Council of Vienna had restored to Austria, as well as in Hungary and Bohemia, Metternich and the Emperor engendered the most fiery hatred by their brutal repression of the new spirit; while the Poles of Galicia were infuriated by the seizure of the last remnant of the old kingdom, the annexation of Cracow. Bohemia had at last recovered something of her old intellectual life, and, with the growth of literature, a vivid national spirit was cultivated. Hungary followed the general political advance of Europe with deep interest and

was fast recovering its rebellious temper. Yet Vienna remained defiant and haughty, prepared only to use the whip and the sword, and the hatred grew deeper in its subject provinces.

In 1848 the third French Revolution gave the signal to all the rebels of Europe, and the flames of insurrection lit up the Austrian Empire from Prague to Milan. Metternich and the Emperor Ferdinand fled in alarm. Vienna itself fell into the hands of the rebels. But Austria still had vigorous soldiers, and they set out to inflict on the subject peoples the last of those brutal chastisements which keep them apart from the dominant race. The insurrection in Bohemia was quickly suppressed and terribly avenged by Prince Windischgrätz. In Italy Marshal Radetzky crushed the rebellion and flung back the Sardinian troops who would assist it. The rising in Hungary was more formidable, and it seemed for a time as if the Magyars would win their independence. Again, however, the weakness of that agglomeration of peoples disclosed itself. The Croats turned against the Hungarians, and with their assistance, with the knives of the still fiercer Rumans from Transylvania, and with the help of a Russian army, the Austrians conquered and once more trampled upon the Magyars. The horrors which not only the ignorant Rumans but the Austrian General Haynau perpetrated in Hungary raised such indignation in Europe that when, in the following year, the General visited London and went

to inspect a large brewery, the draymen compelled him to fly for his life. These atrocities are still within living memory—the memory of Francis Joseph I, for instance—and they keep Hungary cold and hostile to her partner in the Dual Monarchy, in spite of the position she has since won.

When it is suggested that the personality of Francis Joseph holds together the discordant elements of the Empire, we must recall the early years of his reign. To what extent he has obtained any sincere allegiance to Vienna in later years we will consider presently, but it is necessary to remember that he was put on the Austrian throne for the express purpose of securing the triumph of the traditional Austrian policy, and for many years he devoted himself to that object with all the familiar devices of tyranny. He granted the autonomy of Hungary only when terrible and successive disasters threatened Austria with ruin and Hungary looked on with cold indifference ; and he has since then made no concession to the aspirations of his subjects except when the interest of his dynasty recommended it. He has incurred throughout his reign the censure of ingratitude, the repute of sacrificing statesmen and generals time after time to the interests of the monarchy : he has complacently allowed Germans and Magyars to deny elementary rights to the smaller peoples and to resort to the most contemptible means for keeping them in subjection : his personal passion for the restoration of his Empire to its former

dimensions is admittedly the ground of the fatal annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina : and the same criminal ambition has led Austria into that recent alliance with the designs of Germany which has brought ruin upon her and desolation upon Europe.

In 1848 the Emperor Ferdinand, a weak and incompetent monarch, stained the dynasty, in the eyes of aristocratic Austrians, by flying before the mob. Francis Joseph was then serving under Radetzky in Italy : a young officer of eighteen, of no personal distinction, devoted to small military duties and amorous adventure. He had been trained by the Marquis de Bombelles, a lenient tutor, and the priest Rauscher, later Cardinal-Archbishop of Vienna ; and the chief issue of his training was a determination, if he came to the throne, to maintain the despotism of the Hapsburgs and the power of the Church. His mother, the proud and spirited Archduchess Sophia, one of the most ardent reactionaries of Vienna, persuaded the shuddering statesmen of the old régime that Francis Joseph was the right monarch for such a period, and compelled the Emperor to resign and her mediocre husband to forego his right to the throne.

Francis Joseph was no William II. He had no distinction of intellect, no culture, no dreams of Charlemagne and Napoleon, no iron will. But he had been carefully educated in the Hapsburg tradition, and he looked out on this rebellious

Europe of the later forties with the same eyes as Pius IX did after the return from Gaeta. His mother and his clerical teacher and the old aristocracy gathered about him, and helped him to "restore order." There was to be no more "Josephism": he was quite ready to believe that the tolerant and anti-clerical policy of Joseph II had had some share in the French Revolution. He made a new Concordat with Rome which was so violently opposed to the spirit of the age that he dare not carry out its provisions. He entrusted education to the Jesuits and muzzled the press. He tore up the Constitution which the Democrats had won. But the result of that miserable phase of his education may be told in a few words. In 1859 he lost Lombardy. In 1866 he lost the remainder of his Italian provinces, and had to cede Holstein to Prussia. After a thorough and most humiliating defeat, which put an end to Austria's military prestige, he was compelled to withdraw from Germany and to pay to Prussia an indemnity of forty million thalers, which brought Austria to the brink of bankruptcy.

These things are not only part of the education of Francis Joseph I: they are material facts in the study of Austrian psychology. Within less than a hundred years Austria sustained four crushing defeats and sank from the position of arbiter of European affairs to that of a Power falling ominously toward the second class. It was under the strain

of these blows that Francis Joseph made his first concession. He restored in 1867 the kingdom of Hungary and consented to wear a separate crown for it : the financial, military, and foreign affairs of the Empire being referred to joint Delegations from the two kingdoms. It was also under the influence of these humiliations that Francis Joseph, profoundly and permanently saddened at the diminution of his Hapsburg inheritance, turned covetous eyes on the relatively weak Slav lands and decaying Turkish dominion in the south, and dragged Austria into a new imperialist adventure.

First, however, let us study the constituent peoples of the Empire a little more closely. The "Compromise," as it is called, of 1867 relaxed one of the centrifugal forces which threatened to disrupt the Empire, but it brought even the two kingdoms no nearer to psychological unity. There is no soul of Austria-Hungary. There is a soul of Austria, and there is a soul of Hungary ; and, except in those metropolitan circles where the two mingle to some extent, the moods and dreams and outlook of each are materially different.

Vienna is south-German. Notice its position on the map, in the broad valley through which the stream of the Bavarian population has flowed age after age. But Vienna surpasses Munich in its boast of "good-nature." It affirms that the *Gemüthlichkeit* of its citizens has no equal in Europe, and, indeed, very few of its admiring visitors are dis-

posed to question its claim. Its nobility is, perhaps, more mixed in origin than the nobility of any other capital, as its historic record would lead us to suspect, and there are some who complain that the more genuinely Austrian nobles are haughty, poor in culture, faulty even in artistic sense. In point of fact, Austria has never contributed to the culture of the world in proportion to its enormous power and resources. How many world-famed names in science and letters are Austrian? I venture to say that, apart from music, in which it has had its Schubert and Mozart and Haydn, hardly one Austrian has reached the first rank in letters or art or science during three hundred years of world-power. State and Church have attracted the men of ability; and they have smothered ability in the provinces of culture. But the distinction in music is significant: Vienna is the city of gaiety, of parades and festivals, of concerts and theatres, of urbane familiarity and good-natured wit, of wine and sunshine and love. Austria has the highest illegitimate birth-rate in Europe. The main street of a city usually reflects the soul of its middle class. Compare Princes Street and Market Street: Fifth Avenue or Oxford Street or Collins Street and the Champs Elysées. Perhaps there is no more genial monument of this nature in the world than the Ring-Strasse at Vienna: the broad avenue round the central part of the city, the site of the old fortifications, rich in beautiful perspectives and noble

buildings. And over its broad paths, and over the superb Prater, and over the whole pleasant country-side on a summer Sunday you will find one of the most genial and joyous peoples in the world. . . . And this was the people who, when they heard the peal of the war-bugle in 1914, and ought to have known that it probably summoned all Europe to arms, went "delirious with joy" !

Throughout Austria proper you find much the same character, with provincial modifications, as in Vienna. The landed gentry or small nobility have the same evident consciousness of belonging to the ruling, if impoverished race, and the same unfailing thirst for enjoyment. Estates sink under a burden of mortgages, or fall into decay, but the funds shall be found for prodigal hospitality, for house parties and skating festivals and high gambling and merry balls. There is not a little of the physiognomy of the Irish gentry of a generation or two ago. The smaller land-owners and yeomen are more thrifty and industrious, but they have their share of the ruling-race consciousness and the love of gaiety and hospitality. The houses of carved wood, the patriarchal household, the medieval tradition of wifely labour, the picturesque old costumes and customs, are yielding to the cosmopolitan leveller ; but it still suffices for the least pretext to summon a crowd of neighbours for a feast of delirious dancing and merriment. As you rise into the higher levels of Styria, Carinthia, and

Carniola, the short skirts and embroidered aprons of the women-folk and the old songs in the Slovene dialect indicate the thrust of an arm of the Slavs into the German world, but the Slovenes have been thoroughly Germanised and differ little in character from their Alpine neighbours. In the higher province of Vorarlberg, which, until the Austrians tunnelled through its steep eastern face in modern times, was open mainly to Swiss influence and communication, you have a Germanised relic of the old Roman provinces, with strange customs lingering in its deep valleys. In the Tyrol a more purely German type, with veins of Latin blood showing here and there, is braced, on the one hand, by its mountainous surroundings and quickened by a contact with Italy that dates from Roman days : a graft of Italian cheerfulness on German-Alpine solidity and thoughtfulness. The fragments of Italy which have been retained in the Trentino and on the coast of the Adriatic need not be considered here.

In two features the Magyars resemble their partners in the Dual Monarchy : in the consciousness of mastery and of a great national tradition, and in the love of amusement. Yet these resemblances are themselves transfigured by the greater impetuosity of the Magyar temperament. The pride of race is clamant and uncompromising, the chant of earlier deeds disproportioned to the lowly present. More than once, we shall see, when Vienna was prepared (for political reasons) to listen to the cries of the

subject peoples, the Magyars forbade it ; and they are encircled by a ring of hatred from Prague to Czernowitz and Czernowitz to Belgrade. Possessed of the rich central plain, the Alföld, racially isolated from every other people except the despised Turk, they regard with dread the advance of the Slav nations around them. This situation, as well as the long centuries of Austrian injustice and the triumph of becoming a kingdom once more, have unfavourably affected the Magyar character. Almost within living memory—in the days of Kossuth—they won the admiration of Europe, and their great qualities are but obscured by their present trying circumstances. Buda-Pesth is, of course, a second Vienna : “ soulless ” as Vienna, W. Steed declares. But a patient and kindly observer like Mr. Palmer, who has been intimate with them, depicts in attractive colours the qualities of the Magyars : the spirited, progressive, well-read, genial noble on the soil, free from the ceremoniousness of the Austrian or the melancholy of the Pole : the smaller noble land-owner, who controls his estate while his wife attends to dairy and poultry : the peasant men, in braided jacket and tight trousers, and women, in white bodice and skirt with dark blue apron, sitting under the overhanging roof to hear the endless folk-stories or whirling themselves in wild dances on the green. The light soil and long summers and native warmth of blood have eliminated much of their tragic memory.

Although all, nobles and peasants, have the pride

of a master-race and disdain all but the Austrians among their neighbours, they do not exhibit that gravity of age which one finds associated with the Austrian's light-heartedness. Nor must one suppose that they betray those qualities of duplicity and cruelty which have, quite unjustly, been regarded by modern Europe as characteristic of the Turk. The unhappy political development of Europe in our time has tempted prominent Magyars to yield to those vices, and has made their political arena at times a painful spectacle for westerners. But the Magyar is, by nature, manly, honest, generous, and kindly, if a little juvenile in his sense of humour, his fiery impulsiveness, his love of display, his boast of his nation's record, his superstitions, and his long hours of play.

Round these two peoples, whom the chances of history have so strangely yoked, runs the circle of the Slav peoples whose modern renaissance raises one of the greatest problems in Europe. One must distrust every generalisation about the Slavs, every hint at "Slav sensuousness," "Slav melancholy," "Slav imagination," or "Slav peacefulness." Most assuredly you cannot bring under a formula composed of these qualities, or any one of them, the very different fragments of the Slav race which encircle the Danube plains from Bohemia to Carinthia. The melancholy of the Polish noble in Galicia is not the melancholy, or the fiery discontent, of the Czech or the Serb ; nor is the Slav more sensuous

or more peaceful than the Magyar. Until a few years ago the Czech felt no kinship with the Pole and feels none to-day with the Serb. Pan-Slavism is one of those academic fictions which politics may transform into, or regard as, a reality. The call of the blood is feeble, and would be silenced by strong religious and cultural antagonisms if political conditions did not artificially enhance it.

I have already suggested that Bohemia and Moravia might be regarded as the third colony of retired gentlefolk in the Empire, and I have told enough of their history to justify the phrase. From one of the bravest and most enlightened of the smaller peoples of Europe three centuries of ill-treatment and repression had, in the seventeenth century, reduced them to a million or so of backward peasants, whose great past Europe had entirely forgotten. Such an experience alters the character of a people, not only by its psychic effect but by the persistent discouragement or destruction of its better types. Moreover, the depopulation of the country drew Germans in such numbers that more than a third of the population are German to-day. When the Czech awoke to a national consciousness in the nineteenth century and discovered this alienation—discovered that his wealth and land had passed largely to others, his industries were developed by others, his culture and capacity were disdained—there began an anti-German struggle which has ever since absorbed the soul of Bohemia.

It is futile to seek distinctive national features in such a people. The 'character of Bohemia and Moravia is revolt. The Czech is intelligent, industrious, proud, argumentative, intolerant of injustice. To the Austrian's lack of deep sincerity he has opposed a tremendous sense of reality : for the reality he had in view was tremendous. He revived his national literature, his old costumes, his inspiring history ; and decade after decade he has gained ground on the German. At the middle of the nineteenth century Prague contained more Germans than Czechs : now it contains seven times as many Czechs as Germans. Its Czech university overflows with scholars, and the parliamentary champions of Bohemia fight year after year to wring a second Czech university from the reluctant Austrians. There are in the Empire six thousand Czech schools to nine thousand German. With the Slovaks of north-west Hungary—a small kindred people of less developed type—the Czechs now number nearly seven millions, and, until the outbreak of the war, they were, in their Diet and in the Reichsrath, still fighting for the full recognition of their nationality and the just concession of national opportunities. The Czechs do not look to any nation beyond the Empire's frontier, nor do they clamour for independence, in a world so full of peril for small nationalities ; but they are resolved that, if the central-European Empire is to be maintained, their kingdom shall be co-equal in power, as it

is co-equal in culture and almost co-equal in numbers, to the kingdoms of the Austrians and Magyars.

Eastward from Moravia the natural frontier of the Empire follows the massive ridge of the Carpathians to the Danube. But the cupidity of Austria has deserted this natural line and attached to the Empire, like some incongruous modern wing on an ancient mansion, the eight million Poles and Ruthenes of Galicia and Bukowina. In this vast and largely desolate region the millions of peasants have for ages been left at the lowest cultural level, their laborious earnings still further reduced by aristocratic Polish landlords, who, in the solitude of their estates, brooded impotently over their lost kingdom, and by usurious Jewish money-lenders. The occasional traveller beyond the mountains returned with an impression of a careless, dirty, densely ignorant mass, enslaved to rabbis and popes, breaking the monotonous toil of their hard lives by spasms of wild gaiety or sectarian feud or Jew-baiting. Could any good come from Galicia ?

But in the great stirring of the nineteenth century even these peasants of Galicia and Bukowina have recovered the memory of former glory and are now striving to restore it. The Pole, like the Czech, can boast a national record which is included in every history of Europe, and the position of the Galician Poles, separated from Hungary by the mighty wall of the Carpathians and in open communication with their brethren in Russian Poland,

was so plainly dangerous that the Austrian monarchy long ago set itself to conciliate them. The Poles are shrewd bargainers, not men lost in day-dreams of ancient splendour. As a result, they surprised travellers until a few years ago by their loyalty to Austria and the support they gave it in the Reichsrath against other Slavs. There were additional reasons for this. The Poles are Roman Catholics, and the Government they supported was Catholic ; and, on the other hand, they turned with deep aversion from Russia because of its gross injustice to their fellow-Poles. But Austria, lost in the maze of its own politics, has alienated the Poles, and it needs but that change of conduct which Russia promises to win the ardent loyalty of the Galician Poles. There can be little doubt to-day that the world-wide intrigue of Germany included an encouragement of Russia in its despotic treatment of the Poles, and we have every reason to believe that this definitive breach between Russia and Germany will lead to a more humane and more enlightened policy at Petrograd.

But what simplifies in one direction the problem of the Pole only increases its difficulty in another direction. There are in East Galicia and Bukowina nearly four million Ruthenes, and between these and the Poles there is another of those flames of hostility which make a Doré picture of Austria-Hungary. To the pride of the Pole in his ancient kingdom the Ruthene replies that *he* belongs to an

even more ancient and more glorious kingdom : that the Ruthenes were civilised in the eleventh century, and have remained loyal to the true (Greek) form of Catholicism while the Pole has listened to the Jesuit. For ages the Ruthene has been poorer and more ignorant than the Pole, though not of less ability. He has suffered from the Polish land-system and the refusal of schools and political power. Now he also has his renaissance and his hopes. He will have a Diet and a University at Lemberg, a Ruthene school-system, a purely Ruthene province. He feels that he is a detached fragment of a great people of thirty million individuals (mainly in Russia), and he aspires to see the restoration of his Ukraine kingdom. Russia encouraged his aspiration. He is a "Little Russian," a fragment violently torn from the Russian map ; and missionaries were sent to secure the transfer of his spiritual allegiance from Rome to Moscow. Austria in turn became sympathetic, seeing the work of Russia, and encouraged the Ruthenes. It is not improbable that Austria hoped, after the war and defeat of Russia, to build up this Ukraine province for the Ruthenes, at the cost of Russia and for the profit of Austria. These designs have angered the Poles, and for some years they have exchanged lively messages of brotherhood with the Czechs and have rebelled against Austria. To the German-Czech cockpit in Bohemia we add the Pole-Ruthene-Jew cockpit in Galicia.

These two theatres of war are, however, sober and restrained in comparison with a third eastern province, Transylvania. Here a third or fourth race, the Ruman, enters the arena. The Ruman, or Wallach, whose language is largely a debased Latin, claims that he is the descendant of the Roman legions, masters of the world, which settled ages ago in Dacia. That the Roman blood lingers among them cannot be doubted, but situated as they are at the very gate between east and west, that blood has been crossed so many times that the ethnologist now classifies them as a mixture of Turki and Slav. They are keen of wit, and their women produce exceedingly fine textures for their national costume, which has been described as "one of the most graceful and most artistic in Hungary." Yet until recent years the three million Rumans who have overflowed into Hungary, or been enclosed in the advance of the Empire, have been an idle, superstitious, and unprosperous body of peasants. They, too, have shared the great awakening. Young Rumans who have been to college come back with patriotic ardour and summon their fellows to restore the Roman glory of the ancient province of Dacia. Union with Rumania proper is, of course, an essential part of this design, and the Magyars, who are nearly as numerous in Transylvania as the Rumans, sternly resist and oppress the Rumans. When we add that Translyvania has also a very large colony of Protestant Saxons—stolid,

industrious, grave, proud of their German race—and an enormous scattering of Gipsies, Jews, and Armenians, we have a dim idea of the racial and religious ferment in the far east of the Empire.

The southern Slavs present another and, as events have shown, most formidable problem. As long as Turkey ruled the Balkans, it seemed a safe thing to hold the Serbs and Croats of Croatia, Slavonia, and Dalmatia in subjection, but the renaissance of the Balkan principalities has entirely altered the situation ; and in the very height of that renaissance Austria—against the will of Hungary—has thought it opportune to annex Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The difference between Serbs and Croats is mainly one of religion : those branches of the race which have become Catholic take the name of Croats. As in the case of the Czechs, we need not look for national characteristics (which we will consider in a later chapter on the mother-land). The soul of the Serb and Croat in Hungary and Austria is revolt. When Hungary, which controls Croatia and Slavonia, escaped from the galling yoke of Austria, it had no idea of lifting the burden from the southern Slavs. To every symptom of their progress it has been blind and to every claim of respect for their nationality it has been deaf. Austria has at times wondered whether it would not be wise to let these southern Slavs form a great autonomous province, with a Diet and with representatives in the Imperial

Parliament, but Hungary has fiercely resisted the design, and has claimed rather that all of them belong to its own ancient kingdom and ought to be restored to their domination. This attitude is not simply a stubborn assertion of national pride. Only by retaining Croatia do the Hungarians retain that access to the Adriatic which counts for so much in the political struggle of south-eastern Europe. But Croats and Serbs know that they, too, were once independent kingdoms, and the grave and unscrupulous means which, as we shall see presently, have been used for the purpose of checking their aspirations, have made them despair of finding justice under the Dual Monarchy. In Dalmatia, that coveted strip of the coast of the Adriatic, the nearness of Italy and the inclusion of large numbers of Italians complicate the situation. Austrian statesmen have set one race against the other, in order that the ever-increasing Slavs might extinguish the last claim of Italy, and Italians have been too ready to despise rather than co-operate with "the barbaric Slav." Here also Germany, which trusts one day to reach the Adriatic, has been at work. The southern Slav has a quick and adaptive mind, an eye for the picturesque and the beautiful, a certain native dignity, a fire of soul that may make him formidable. But the older nations of the Triple Alliance have seen in these things only the brightness of a childhood that will never grow up. So the Romans once thought of the northern nations.

It will now be plain that it is futile to attempt to bring all the peoples of Austria-Hungary under any definite statement of character. It is, in fact, as needless as it is futile, partly because later descriptions of Russia, Poland, and Serbia will apply to the millions of Slavs in Austria-Hungary, and partly because the subject peoples were not responsible for the great decision of the year 1914 which has put the character of the nation on trial. Austria and Hungary have controlled the national policy which led almost inevitably to that development, and Austria and Hungary alone have, as far as we know, stooped in the course of the war to outrages similar to those committed by the German (especially Bavarian) troops. Yet if there is one trait of character which we may assign in common to Bavaria, Austria, and Hungary, it is the reverse of cruelty. Intense love of pleasure, kindliness, and good-fellowship were, until this war occurred, the qualities quite generally assigned as distinctive of the three peoples. But beyond question Austria, acting in harmony with Germany, inaugurated this ghastly struggle and has waged it with ruthless ferocity. Mr. G. M. Trevelyan, an especially conscientious reporter, has, after a visit to Serbia, brought an appalling indictment against the Austrian, and particularly the Magyar, troops (*Daily Chronicle*, March 8th). The most revolting outrages were committed during the two invasions of Serbia, and "two thousand men, women, and children were murdered." Again we

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have to solve, if it is possible, a grave psychological and moral problem.

It is an error to suppose that the aggressive action of Austria, which seems so little in accord with the features I have assigned it, is due merely to the persuasion of Germany. Conditions which are peculiar to Austria and Hungary predisposed them to listen to the voice of the tempter, and might indeed have involved them at any time in an aggressive war. These conditions may, after the historical sketch I have given, be briefly described. As in the case of Germany, it is most desirable to understand that the war was not the result of the intrigue of a clique or class, but an expression, however perverse, of what the nation at large regarded as a national need.

We saw how the early and crude experiments in statesmanship of Francis Joseph ended in the profound humiliation of 1866. In his anxiety and bewilderment the Emperor met the demands of the Magyars and, by a sacrifice of the supreme domination of Austria, enlisted their interest in defence of his dynasty. But the recognition of the autonomy of the Magyars created a new aspiration throughout the Slav fringe of the Empire, and the great struggle for a respect of their languages and political rights began almost immediately. The Poles and Slovenes were sufficiently pacified, and the Serbs and Croats had not yet developed their strength. But the Czechs, the Ruthenes, the

Rumans, and the Italians commenced that fiery insistence on their rights which has made Austria-Hungary a political vortex for more than forty years. Francis Joseph in the early years of this agitation expressed sympathy with its moderate aims and gave the Czechs an impression that he would restore their kingdom. But, for all the supposed power of the Hapsburgs, he yielded to the unhappy jealousy of the Magyars and the general reluctance in Austria to make concessions. He made no effort to check the despotic and cruel action of the Magyars under Count Tisza (1875-90) or of the successive Austrian Premiers. Few and totally inadequate concessions were made during the whole period to the advancing Slavs. To the end their demands for universities were scandalously evaded or inadequately realised.

In 1877 Russia attacked and defeated Turkey, and at the close of the war Austria-Hungary was directed or requested by the Congress of Berlin to "occupy and administer" Bosnia and Herzegovina. The tragic sequel in our time of this imperialist adventure entitles it to a closer consideration. Bismarck claimed in later years that he was the author of the design, and it is piquant to conceive that political Mephistopheles as diverting the attention of Austria to the Balkans, of Italy and France to Africa, and of Russia to the far east, while Germany nursed her forces and resources. Others dwell on the fact that it was Lord Salisbury who, at the Congress, made the proposal, and they lament

again the fatal error of England in its long antagonism to Russia. But Austrian writers have made it plain that Count Andrassy proposed the occupation in 1876, and that Russia agreed, in general terms, to purchase Austria's neutrality in the Russo-Turkish War at that price ; though at the Congress itself the Russian plenipotentiary expressly said that Russia agreed to occupation and administration only. The Sultan remained the sovereign of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and so little were the inhabitants consulted that Austria had to enforce her administration by a long and bloody struggle. Hungary, moreover, resented the occupation. It not only brought a further two million Slavs into the distracted Empire, but it raised delicate issues as to the respective shares of Austria and Hungary in the control of the provinces.

Hardly any but an Austrian writer now doubts that the occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina was in the main a solace of the bruised feelings of the Emperor Francis Joseph. The curtailment of his Empire saddened him, and this opening of a new wing at the foot of the Balkans, this facile domination of a small and helpless population, restored his pride. Certainly the provinces have been much better administered under Austria than they had been under Turkey, but the continued oppression and the unscrupulous treatment of the Serbs in recent years show how little sincerity there was in the pretext of saving them from the barbarous Turk. Francis Joseph desired the annexation of

the provinces in 1878, and was angry at the failure of his statesmen to secure it. Twice since that date, in 1897 and 1906, he sounded Russia on the subject and met with a refusal. And the fateful and disdainful completion of the work in 1908, when the provinces were formally annexed, was notoriously perpetrated for the pleasure of the Emperor. The historian of the future will fasten on Francis Joseph a guilt only less than that of William II because his intelligence and power of appreciation were less.

It is unnecessary for my purpose to relate the details of Austrian history during the remainder of the century. Hungary continued to rule its Slavs, who rebelled several times, with an iron hand : Austria was governed by a coalition of Slavs and Catholics, under Count Taafe and later Count Badeni, and strove to hold the insurgents at bay by inadequate concessions. As the century drew to a close the Czechs grew more violent and increasingly affected their Slav cousins, while the rise of Socialism in both Austria and Hungary added to the growing distraction.

Meantime the Pan-German movement spread to Austria, especially after 1890, and a certain similarity of conditions disposed the German elements to listen to its pretentious claims. In its strict form the Pan-German ideal could not, of course, be adopted in Austria. The Germans, or Teutons, formed only a fourth of the population, and the Slavs were not moved by the meretricious

plea of a Houston Stewart Chamberlain that they came under the head of *Germanen*. The Magyars naturally resented the movement, and the rulers of Austria could not but perceive that its one logical conclusion would be to hand over the German provinces to Germany. But the Pan-German literature supplied both Austrians and Hungarians with pretexts for aggressive action. A vigorous race, or two vigorous races (for no Austrian would admit a lack of vigour), with increasing population and developing commerce, must expand ; and to the south of them lay this colony of backward and conflicting peoples over whom the dying Turk extended a feeble and contemptible rule. How much co-operation there was between Germany and Austria until ten years ago it is not at present possible to say, but the known events do not point to any close understanding between the senior partners of the Triple Alliance. Austria remained on passable terms with Russia, and in 1903 agreed with Russia to enforce on Turkey a program of reform, the so-called Mürzsteg Program. In those days it seems that Austria-Hungary meditated on its own account an advance over the Balkans to the Mediterranean—at least to Salonica—by some such methods as had governed its first expansion : comparatively bloodless and insincere. One must realise the temptation. The Turkish Empire was, in the general opinion of Europe, breaking up, and a large slice of the old world was about to be opened for exploitation.

Until 1903 the attitude of Serbia tended to encourage this ambition. King Alexander was friendly to Austria, and was suspected of being disposed to accept Austrian suzerainty. But Alexander was murdered in 1903, and King Peter gradually revealed a spirit of independence. In 1905 Serbia and Bulgaria formed a Tariff Union, and Austria retorted by a boycott of Serbian produce and cattle and pigs. This narrowly-conceived revenge had the natural effect of inflaming the Serbs against Austria, and causing them to look further afield and develop their resources more industriously. In the same year, 1905, Japan defeated Russia and gratified the Germanic world by a supposed proof of Russia's feebleness ; though the intrigue of Germany in impelling Russia to fight, and the friendliness of England in warning her against fighting, assisted in bringing about the momentous rapprochement of England and Russia. Just at this time, however, when Russia seemed feeblest, Baron von Aehrenthal, a statesman of more vigour than penetration and experience, obtained power in Austria (1906) and led the country nearer to its fate. With revolting cynicism he abandoned the role of reformer in Macedonia and, for a railway concession, restored to the Sultan his liberty to maltreat his Christian subjects. England and Russia were drawn together in the task of checking him, but Baron von Aehrenthal looked on both Powers with the light disdain of inexperience and the pedantic conceit of a German. When the Young Turks effected a revolution at Constantinople, Baron

von Aehrenthal boldly announced to an astonished Europe—even Germany gasped a little—that Bosnia and Herzegovina were annexed to the Austro-Hungarian Empire. He proposed to flout entirely the Turkish sovereignty, though the leading Powers compelled him to pay an indemnity and make certain concessions. The long-cherished aspiration of the Emperor was criminally gratified: the seeds of murder were sown among an impulsive and ill-treated people.

It is a not unfamiliar experience that a crime needs other crimes to support it, and Baron von Aehrenthal, the supreme representative of Austrian statesmanship, advanced boldly on his way. In March 1909 it was announced that fifty-three Croats were to be tried at Agram for seditious attempts to secure rebellion in Croatia, Slavonia, and Bosnia. Corruption is flagrant in the Austro-Hungarian Reichsrath, and it is well known that the press is extensively controlled by the dual Governments, yet the scandalous behaviour of the judge and of the prosecution during the six-months' trial excited angry comment even in Austria. Thirty-one Croats were sentenced, but the procedure was so patently dishonest that it was found necessary, on appeal, to quash the convictions. Meantime another serious outrage was committed, and the eyes of both of the dominant peoples should have been opened.

The issue of the *Neue Freie Presse* (Vienna) for March 25, 1909, contained an article by a well-known professor of history, Dr. Friedjung, on the seditious movements of the Slavs. Some of the

leading Serbo-Croat politicians were expressly accused of sedition, and an air of severity was given to the impeachment by the inclusion of minutes of the meetings of the "Slovenski Jug" (a Slav society) and other documents. These documents had been supplied by the Austrian ministry, and one may without injustice assume that the employment of a distinguished scholar in the preliminary impeachment was only the prelude to graver steps. The annexation was to be justified in the eyes of Europe and its Slav critics were to be suppressed. But the accused politicians prosecuted Dr. Friedjung, and, in spite of the careful selection of the jury and the scandalous conduct of the judge, they laid before the court so crushing a refutation that the charge had to be withdrawn. The documents were such clumsy forgeries that the President of the "Slovenski Jug," a Slav professor, was able to prove that he was making a long stay in Berlin at the time when he was represented as signing the spurious minutes in Belgrade. It was afterwards proved that the documents were forged and photographed in the Austrian Legation at Belgrade.¹ Baron von Aehrenthal lightly observed that he had never believed in the genuine-

¹ Since the present war turns largely on Austrian accusations of the Serbs in 1914, the conscientious student will do well to read a fuller account of these abominable proceedings. It is plain that both Austrian and Magyar Governments were deeply implicated in these efforts to secure judicial murders. A convenient account may be read in Mr. H. W. Steed's authoritative work, *The Hapsburg Monarchy* (1914), pp. 100-104; a longer account is given in Mr. R. W. Seton-Watson's *Southern Slav Question*.

ness of the documents used by Dr. Friedjung (and secretly supplied by his own staff), and the removal (and later advancement) of the various officials implicated was understood to put an end to the affair.

But the Slavs had seen the naked souls of their opponents, and the struggle became graver. I am not concerned to show that there are unscrupulous politicians, even in highest offices of State, in Austria and Hungary. It is, no doubt, material to bear this in mind, but my concern is with the mass of the people : to show how the kindly and humane body of the Austrian and Magyar peoples came to sanction an aggressive and ruthless campaign. In this regard it is important to appreciate the difference between the Austrian and the German attitude. Although Germany has had a very considerable and increasing influence over Austrian policy since the accession to power of Baron von Aehrenthal, and has ensured that the ambition of Austria-Hungary should act in complete harmony with its own ambition, the aims of the two nations are materially different in some respects. There never was in Austria so widespread an appreciation of war, so general a disposition to face a *European* struggle, as we found in Germany. There was no long tradition of aggressive imperialism, no drenching of the entire nation with popular chauvinist appeals, no direction of an entire generation to a single military purpose, no strident demand of colonies and of the command of the sea. Austria was not summoned constantly by its Emperor to embark on some new "world-

policy," or to see its prosperity threatened by the other Powers of Europe, or to mourn and prevent a loss of half a million children every year.

The German people were not duped by their ruler and statesmen : the aim and program of the war had long been familiar to them. But the Austrians and Magyars were to a great extent deceived. It was not the prospect of a European war, but the design of punishing Serbia alone, which made them "delirious with joy." During the fateful weeks of July the press, largely written by Jews of no national sentiment and controlled by the Government, assured the people that Russia would not intervene. Had it intervened in 1908 ? There would be no European struggle, but a severe chastisement of Serbia—no doubt followed by annexation in the usual stages—and then a very desirable peace. Since Austria had checked the expansion of Serbia to the Adriatic after the Balkan War, the struggle of the Serbs and Croats and other Slavs had been extraordinary. In 1913 the life of the Reichsrath had been paralysed for weeks by a furious blowing of whistles and trumpets and other elements of pandemonium. The press further informed the peaceful Austrian and the sensitive Magyar that behind all this undignified outburst Russia was intriguing in Galicia, and Serbia in Croatia and Bosnia. In Austria, moreover, the balance of parliamentary power was severely shaken by the advance of the Social Democrats against the Christian Socialists in the 1911 elections, and by the

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increasing solidarity of the Slavs. The situation was profoundly distressing and disturbing.

I am far from suggesting that the Austrians and Magyars were blameless. As a body they acquiesced in that policy of coercion and refusal of rights which inflamed the Slavs and gave direct occasion for Russian and Serbian intrigue : as a body they showed far too little resentment of the grave corruption which had been revealed in 1909 : and as a body they betrayed a careless inappreciation of the general European conditions which made any further encroachment on the Balkans a step of extreme gravity. Yet one understands their development. Then, crowning the years of irritation and wounded pride, came the news of the assassination at Serajevo of the heir to the throne. It is idle for cold and distant observers to say how the Austrians should then have behaved : to point out certain very singular features of the assassination, and to recall that Austrian statesmen and lawyers had not shown themselves very scrupulous in handling evidence against Serbia. The crime gave the arch-schemers at Berlin their opportunity : it coincided remarkably with the supposed embarrassments of Britain, the particular equipment of Germany, the unpreparedness of Belgium, and the comparative unreadiness of France and Russia. The press of Austria and Hungary raged with a demand for punishment : just punishment of Serbia, not territorial expansion. The people agreed, even when the ultimatum to Serbia left no alternative but war,

and its terms plainly indicated a design of *beginning* the control of Serbia. We may imagine the Austrian holding some reserve on the second point, if he perceived it. He would at least punish Serbia. It would be time afterwards to discuss the rest. So he hung out his colours gaily as the troops marched to the field.

During those days the German ambassador at Vienna was a fitting instrument of the advanced German policy, and there is little room for doubt that he was insidiously directing the procedure. Russia would not fight, he said. It presently became evident to statesmen and diplomatists that Russia *would* fight, and that Germany and France, and probably England, would be involved. But these things were fully known only behind the doors of foreign offices : the Austrian press continued to approve "the punitive expedition to Belgrade." Russia mobilised, as such a slow-mobilising Power was bound to do. Then, in the last stage of the published diplomatic correspondence, we perceive hesitation on the part of Austria. Whatever folly the press might put before the people, statesmen knew that an insistence on the Serbian campaign would almost certainly involve Europe in war. Whether it was the Emperor or his advisers who hesitated—whether the motive was humanity or dread of the awful chances of such a war—Austria hesitated and entered into hopeful negotiations with Russia. We must remember always that Austrians and Hungarians are only half the population of

Austria-Hungary, and that not all of these are chauvinists. And Germany, noting the hesitation, and fearing the chances of peace rather than of war, issued its insolent ultimatum to Russia.

For Austria and Hungary it is war on the Slav, and all the enthusiasm and even the brutal outrages are intelligible. The Magyar troops who have gouged out the eyes of Serbians, and cut off the noses and breasts of their women (as Mr. Trevelyan says), and murdered their children, are thinking of the Croat outrages of 1849, and the fierce struggle of the last twenty years. There is no pardon for this revolting return to savagery : I do but explain it. It is the last stage of a long and fateful development. There are those who would ignore these things and think of the Austrian and the Magyar only as we knew them in time of peace. It would be a grave error. Let each people know with terrible plainness whatever excesses it has been led to perpetrate in this storm of passion. Let each people mark the various stages in the almost inevitable development ; the ambition of its rulers, the duplicity of some of its statesmen, the corruption of its press, the mad riot of its own sentiments, the awful price of political injustice. Only thus do we guard against a recurrence of this transformation of a nation that boasted above all things of its good-nature, and was singularly joyous and good-natured, into the very source and centre of a ghastly carnage.

Francis Joseph closes his long career. It began

with an ignoble attempt to pursue the work of the Holy Alliance after 1848, and it ends in a vain imperialist adventure which has let hell loose in Europe. A man of no little charm of character, of personal integrity and comparative sobriety, he has made the grave blunder of acting on the divine right of kings in an age which has discarded that superstition. He has become the willing dupe of an imperialist adventurer. Austria will now sink definitely into the second rank of Powers, and it will be a political miracle if the bulk of the Slavs remain in their subjection. Probably the three old kingdoms—Austria, Hungary, and Bohemia—will unite their devastated resources and form a federated Empire of thirty millions in the heart of Europe, with their one outlet to the sea. But it will be years before the scorched soul of Austria-Hungary returns to its old gaiety and sunny dignity. Mr. Arnold Toynbee (*Nationality and the War*, 1915) forecasts that even the Magyars may break away from Austria and unite with the southern Slavs; and that, in that event, Austria, and perhaps Bohemia, will join the German Empire. It is hardly probable that the Allies will allow the German Empire to issue from this war far stronger (by the absorption of Austria) than it was before, and it will be gathered from what has proceeded that I regard either the surrender of its personality by Austria or the union of Hungary with the Slavs as utterly impossible.

CHAPTER III

THE DEPARTING TURK

Popular estimate of "The Unspeakable Turk"—A libel on the Turkish people—Origin of the Osmanli Turks and dilution of their Asiatic blood—Early civilisation and causes of degeneration—The Turk "an honest, truthful, self-respecting man"—The causes and authors of outrages—The Kurd, the Circassian, and the Albanian—Armenia and the Balkans—Palace-corruption in the nineteenth century—Abd ul Hamid—The young Turks and the Revolution—Their character and failure—Helplessness of the real Turk—Evil influence of Austria and Germany—The Turk dragged into the war.

IT is not improbable that the re-arrangement of the map of Europe at the close of the great war will leave no room for the Turk. During more than a hundred years the advancing Powers have been detaching provinces from his Empire, and it would seem that his criminal and foolish participation in this struggle will entail upon him the loss of the last remnant of his European estate. For him there is no device of modern casuistry. No nation threatened his dominion or his commerce, and he had no just interest in the grounds of the quarrel. From sheer cupidity to recover the lands which he had forfeited by a long career of crime and folly, he associated himself with one whom he believed to be a powerful and invincible adventurer. He gambled, and lost: and one may assume that he will now take back across the Bosphorus the

tattered banner which he brought into Europe, fresh and triumphant, more than five centuries ago. Yet his spirit will haunt Europe for many a day, and it is well to study him. To him is due, in the largest measure, that crumpling or distortion of the map of eastern Europe, that incongruous mating of antagonistic peoples, which will long engage the concern of diplomatists and endanger the peace of the world.

In the greater part of Europe his expulsion will be hailed with joy. With our familiar practice of dwelling on the remote origin of peoples we are apt to conceive the Turk as an oriental intruder among the white race, an Asiatic whose blood forbids that he should ever assimilate our western culture and condemns him irremediably to the category of the Huns and the Avars. If we do happen to learn that he is at least not more Asiatic than the Finn and the Magyar, who have assuredly not proved refractory to our culture, we remind ourselves of a feature which at once dissociates him from those peoples. The Turk never embraced Christianity. Whether that be a cause or an effect of his inferiority, it is claimed that his recent conduct in Europe, after five centuries of contact with Christian civilisation, makes him unfit for our society. Until yesterday the hills and valleys of the Balkan Peninsula, to say nothing of the distant plains of Armenia, were reddened with the blood of his innocent victims. "The Unspeakable Turk," Carlyle called

him half a century ago ; and with that brand upon him he retires beyond the pale of European civilisation.

So runs the popular indictment, and even in the mind of those who regard the peoples of the earth with larger and more discriminating vision the Turk seems to be condemned by his own failure. His apologists—and until yesterday he had many—entreat us to study him, not in the fringes of his Empire, where an unfortunate intercourse with Christians inflames his religious passions, but in the congenial peace of his Mohammedan provinces. In Macedonia he had to contend with the Greek and the Bulgar and the Serb, who derided all that he held sacred and openly coveted his territory : in the cities of the Mediterranean coast, even in Constantinople, he is in a minority among a bewildering and almost equally impassioned crowd of Christians of various sects : in Mesopotamia and Armenia further millions of Christians scoff at his Koran and appeal to Christian Powers to redeem them. Study him in the heart of Asia Minor, and you find him quite a genial, courteous, and honourable host.

Yet the very fact that his territory has been thus invaded from every frontier, and that in his largest cities he now finds himself in a minority, suggests a grave incompetence or defect of character on his part. Once the crescent floated proudly in the breeze from the Persian Gulf to the banks of the

Danube, from the northern shore of the Black Sea to the sands of Algiers. Now the Osmanli Turks are a shrinking body of only about ten millions, incapable of checking the Christian invaders of their economic life, sinking (Sir Edwin Pears says) under the horrid ravages of venereal disease. Greeks and Armenians appropriate their trade ; Germans teach them—once the greatest warriors in Europe—the art of war, and find the capital and the brain for their national enterprises.

The rule of the Sultan still extends over a vast and fertile territory, with a superb climate and a magnificent coast-line. The Turks occupy areas which at one time or other nourished five or six great civilisations : those of the colonial Greeks, of the ancient Lydians and Hittites, of the Syrians and Phœnicians, of the Assyrians and Babylonians, even, in part, of the Persians and Armenians. Yet from the soil of six civilisations they extract so poor a return that they live on the brink of bankruptcy ; and the shapeless mounds in those desolate regions which were once rich empires rebuke them more sternly than the blood-stains on the Balkan hills. Rich mineral resources are locked idly in their mountains : their agriculture is primitive and their industries are elementary : their metropolitan harbour is one of the finest and most finely situated in the world, yet their shipping is slender : their territory is the appointed high-way between east and west, yet foreigners must equip it with railways. Instead of

developing their great resources, they are content to live parasitically, by means of one of the crudest and most corrupt administrative systems in the world, upon a decaying and impoverished population.

This very grave but entirely just indictment of the Turk must seem to confirm the popular estimate of his value, and suggest that he is indeed refractory to our civilisation and must retire beyond its frontiers. People think that they understand this obstinacy when they read, as one often does, that he is a Mongol. They imagine the nomadic, truculent, lawless spirit of the central Asiatic in his blood, and think that his Mohammedanism is a sensuous and fanatical religion which flatters his temperament and enrages him against the more austere ideals of the Galilæan. Yet I venture to say that there is not in the whole of European literature one properly informed writer who does not give the Turk an excellent character. Sir E. Pears is one of the most cautious of our authorities, but he assures us that "the typical Turk is an honest, truthful, and self-respecting man": that is to say, he ascribes to the Turk precisely those virtues in which he is generally assumed to be deficient. Sir W. and Lady Ramsay, who will assuredly not be suspected of any bias in favour of a non-Christian, are even more generous. But there is, as we shall see later, a general agreement that the character of the Turk is good, and we

have another interesting psychological problem to solve.

The Turk is not a Mongol, and he has probably less "yellow" blood in his veins than the Magyar : he is not a moral monstrosity, but a quite decent fellow : he is not unprogressive, but quite as capable as the Japanese or any other eastern people of assimilating western culture. Yet the indictment I have drawn up against him is irrefutable. Again we need a patient and unprejudiced consideration of all the circumstances.

Let me, as before, begin at the beginning. If you glance at a map of the Old World, you notice a broad region lying between the Ægean Sea and the Caspian and Persian Gulf, which unites three continents. That region was the breeding-ground of primitive civilisations. It is not improbable that an eastern extension of it, which is now below the waters of the Indian Ocean, was the actual cradle of the race and the source of dispersion, and we therefore understand how early tribes would press up the valley of Mesopotamia and spread over the three continents. Certain it is, at least, that the area between the Mediterranean, the Black Sea, the Caspian, and the Persian Gulf produced most of the peoples who wrote the early story of civilisation. One people, or several peoples, descended upon the fertile valley of the Nile : others settled on the plains of Mesopotamia. One people divided into the two great branches which we call

the European and the Polynesian races, and travelled far to the west and east: another sent branches into central Asia, to found the historic civilisations of India and China. Others, in successive ages, enter the record as Ægeans and Lydians, Phrygians and Hittites, Phœnicians and Jews, Medes and Persians, Armenians and Arabs.

It seems that one branch of this early race scattered along what is now the western frontier of Asia, and it is this which in the course of time discharged the Finns and Magyars and Turks upon Europe: neither a yellow nor a white, but a yellowish-white, race. The colours of the great branches of mankind have been fixed in their later habitations, and are not primitive. The Turk has, it is true, certain traditions about an early home in Mongolia, on the fringe of the Desert of Gobi, but modern scholars support him in his rejection of these vague suggestions. The Osmanli Turks of to-day belong to a large race, the Turki, which spread about the Caucasus and the shores of the Caspian, and no doubt sent adventurous branches at some time as far as Mongolia. Over-population and the pressure of the Mongols, who founded an aggressive empire, drove the Turki to the more congenial regions of the south, where they were received into the empire of the Arabs and the religion of Mohammed. By the twelfth century they had spread over the whole Mohammedan world and had, by sheer ability and military vigour,

occupied a commanding position in Egypt, Syria, Persia, and Asia Minor. The Arabs were degenerating, and the vigorous invaders easily won the higher commands ; but these Seljuk Turks degenerated in turn, and are lost amidst the population of the old Arab empire.

In the region of the Caspian, however, the Turki retained their energy, and in the thirteenth century, when a fresh extension of the Mongols harried them, a band migrated southward under their chief Ertoghrul. It is said that they numbered only a few hundred, and they wandered in search of a new home across Persia, Armenia, and Asia Minor. It happened that they arrived among their Seljuk kinsmen at Konieh in the thick of a battle, and they were of great service to the Sultan. For this he awarded them a small territory in Asia Minor, and they settled. Ertoghrul's son, Othman (or Osman), continued to lead them in the service of the Sultan, and got more territory ; and when, at the close of the thirteenth century, the dynasty of the Seljuk Turks came to an end, the descendants of Othman and his followers—the Osmanli Turks—asserted their independence and laid the foundation of a great empire.

From the smallness of the original contingent and the need of intermarrying constantly with their neighbours, we gather that the Turki blood must already have been considerably diluted when the Osmanli State was founded ; and the remarkable

later history of the State is a continuous record of mingling of blood. To their west was the Greek or Byzantine Empire, which was far advanced in enervation, and the Turks, knowing only the right of the sword, turned toward its cultivated provinces and shining cities. Before long they took Brussa, and made it their capital, and across the Sea of Marmora they would often catch sight of the marble walls and golden domes of the vast imperial palace at the water's edge. Within quarter of a century the Turks took Nicæa and all the Asiatic cities, and built up so formidable a military power that the Christian emperors made peace with them, and did not disdain to offer their daughters to the infidel. By the middle of the fourteenth century the Turkish empire was so superior to the Christian in administration that large numbers of Christians voluntarily migrated into it and mingled with the Turks ; and captive Christian girls were introduced in great numbers into the harems. The empire now spread far into Europe, as well as into the east, and women of a dozen nationalities contributed to the blood of each new generation of "the Osmanli Turks."

The mingling was, however, not confined to mothers. In 1365 the famous corps of the Janissaries was founded ; and for more than three centuries this corps was recruited entirely from Christian sources. The troops scattered among the subject Christian peoples had to select the finest boys in each district and send them to Brussa. Christian

parents not infrequently sold their boys, or pressed them on the Turks, in order to get admission for them into this highly privileged corps. These thousands of boys were then trained in the Mohammedan religion and the art of war, and they became the core of the Turkish army. When the period of service was over, they married and settled on the best lands of Asia Minor, and merged into the Turkish population.

It is not necessary to relate here the story of the spread of the Ottoman Empire, but these features of it must be brought to the notice of those who are disposed to connect the character of the Osmanli Turk with Turki or Mongol blood. The follower of Othman arrived in, and freely mingled with, a world that already had the blood of six peoples in its veins. He found a religion which consecrated his military ardour to the service of a greater ideal than "king and country," and his native vigour and bravery, his just and able administration, gave him marked advantages in that decaying world of effete Syrians and Greeks. By the beginning of the fourteenth century his red banner floated in triumph from the banks of the Danube to the banks of the Euphrates. Timur the Tartar (Tamerlane) shattered his power more speedily than it had been raised, but within a generation of the death of Timur the Turk had more than restored it and was once more before the formidable walls of Constantinople. The Christian metropolis, which had received its death-blow from its fellow-Christian "crusaders"

two centuries before and was but the strong shell of an extinct organism, fell to him in 1453. In the next century he reached the gates of Vienna in the west, and the ancient capital of Persia in the east ; while his irresistible armies poured over Syria and Egypt and subdued the coast of Africa as far as Tripoli. By the middle of the sixteenth century, when his power was at its height, his empire spread over about two million square miles and included fifty million people. Christendom shuddered before the menace. Already the kingdoms of the Greeks, Bulgars, Rumans, Serbs, and Magyars had been shattered by the waves of the Ottoman onset. No wonder if the informed Turkish official of recent years smiled to hear Serb and Bulgar boast of *their* ancient glories.

We must, as I said, when we speak of “Turkish blood,” bear in mind this portentous expansion of a few companies of horse into the greatest Empire of the Middle Ages. No doubt millions of the earlier or Seljuk Turks were gathered into the Empire, but these also had been recent immigrants and had mixed freely with the older population. Polygamy and the harem and the Janissary system sustained the confusion, and the Turk’s peculiar attitude towards women made it a matter of indifference to him whether the mother of his sons was a Slav, an Albanian, a Greek, a Syrian, an Armenian, or a Turk. It was enough that she provided another sword for the defence or the spread of Islam. The Empire was not a nationality, in the western sense.

The Turk had a natural pride of race over against the subject peoples who were obviously not Turks, but his feeling was essentially religious, and his polity appealed to him as a theocracy. Every good Moslem, whatever his extraction, was a good member of the Ottoman Empire.

Let us notice, too, the power of organisation and the high ideal of administration exhibited by the Turk in those early years. In integrity of administration he was, perhaps, surpassed by none in Europe, and the Greek chronicles bear constant witness to the satisfaction with which subjects of the corrupt Byzantine Empire passed under his yoke. He inherited, and promptly assimilated, the older Arab-Persian culture, and in less than two centuries he reached a development of art and letters which it took the nations of Europe twice or thrice as long to attain. We must add that even in those early days he was a truculent warrior, and was apt to ignore every sentiment of humanity and civilisation in his struggle with the Christian unbeliever. But this was a general feature of the time, not a particular feature of the Turk. The struggle of Latin and Greek Christian at Constantinople had produced horrors that the most ignorant Kurd could not surpass. In general, the Turk was not intolerant. Vast numbers of Jews found peace in his dominions when they fled from the savagery of the nations of Europe, especially from Spain.

With like brevity we may summarise the long

story of the dissolution of the Empire, since it is only certain general aspects of its fall that concern us. The dynasty of Othman survives in the Sultan of to-day and has never been interrupted, but its marvellous success soon led to its degeneration. By the end of the seventeenth century the Sultans, surveying so mighty an Empire, relaxed from their exertions and put princely distinction in the magnificence of their palaces and harems. High officers are quickly corrupted when they must pander to corrupt tastes, and the degeneration spread through the ranks of the military and civil hierarchy. The Christian nations of the west were fully occupied in warring with each other, and for a time no new enemy appeared. The Janissaries degenerated, and became a turbulent and unprogressive body, while the art of war advanced. The civil officials and soldiers, unable to receive their due share of the revenue, which was squandered on the luxury of Constantinople, turned upon the helpless subjects and exacted further taxes. Being Moslems, they naturally preferred to exploit the Christian rather than the fellow-Moslem, and the chapter of oppression, rising, and bloody suppression opened. Constantinople, gaping for more money, grasped the situation, and made officials pay for the privilege of exploitation. So the Empire sank. The Koran commended above all things submission to the will of Allah, and in a theocracy the will of Allah is interpreted in the capital. The Turk is not

“a fatalist.” He merely believes in a Providential ruling of the world more literally than most of his Christian neighbours do. It was a fortunate thing for his earthly rulers.

The degenerating Turk was beaten off the seas by the Italians and Spaniards, and Europe ceased to tremble. Just at this juncture a new and vigorous Power arose among the Christians. France might take Algiers and Tunis, and Austria recover Hungary, but nothing less than a union of these older nations seriously threatened the Turk, and there was no fear of their uniting. But Peter the Great arose in Russia, and that vast and inert region on the northern frontier of Turkey began to assume the character of a united and aggressive Christian Power. Peter, and Catherine the Great, had another advantage, besides nearness, over the other Christian rulers. Constantinople was the cradle of their religion, and they could excite in their soldiers a peculiar ardour to place the Greek cross once more on the summit of S. Sophia. The slow march of Russia toward Constantinople began early in the eighteenth century. By the beginning of the nineteenth century Napoleon and the Tsar were discussing plans of dividing between them the empire of the degenerate Turk, and the other Powers of Europe were, in face of that ambition, modifying their traditional attitude toward the Moslem. The Sultan discovered a new and remarkable source of strength in the mutual jealousies of the Christian

Powers. This frailty had long preserved him from an attack by united Christendom, which would easily have swept him out of Europe any time in the last two hundred years. Now it promised positive assistance against attack. We cannot profess a very great surprise that the Turk is not convinced of the superiority of Christianity over Islam.

The story of Turkey in the nineteenth century is, in broad outline, the record of an effort of Russia (leading to a rival effort of Austria) to put a spirit of rebellion into the Balkan and Danubian peoples, and of other nations to check the dismemberment when it did not suit them, and profit by it when it did. Across the path of Russia to Constantinople lay the Turkish provinces which are now Rumania and Bulgaria, and it was necessary to attach and inflame the Slav interest in those provinces. Austria was not less eager to reach the Mediterranean across the lands of the decaying Turk, and she joined in the stimulation of the oppressed peoples. England, on the contrary, watched these advances with grave distrust, for she had considerable interests in the east long before the opening of the Suez Canal. These conflicting and not unselfish influences brought about the modern situation. Turkey was not indifferent to reform. More than one Sultan in the early part of the nineteenth century tried to improve the administration, and succeeded to some extent ; but so deep-rooted a corruption is not easily removed, and the later Sultans, Abd ul Aziz and

Abd ul Hamid, cynically relied on the conflicting interests of the Powers and the bitter hatred of Moslem for Christian, and of Greek Christian for Latin Christian. Meantime, the backward and oppressed peoples of the Empire, of whom none had sincerely expected a great resurgence, developed the will and the power to wrest their destinies from the hand of the Turk.

Before, however, we consider such phases of this development as may throw light on our proper subject, let us endeavour to understand the normal character of the Turk. In our democratic age there is an exaggerated tendency, in some quarters, to relieve the mass of a nation from responsibility for that nation's misconduct and cast it upon their rulers, or their statesmen, or some other relatively small class. We have seen that this indulgence cannot be granted in the case of Germany and of Austria. In the case of Turkey there is firm ground for admitting it. Constitutional life in that country is so recent and so imperfect, and the mass of the people are so ill-instructed, that it would be absurd to cast upon the Turkish people the responsibility either for the massacres in Europe and Armenia or for the entry of Turkey into the war.

A short consideration of the Turks in the wings of the Empire, where the atrocities have taken place, will enable us to appreciate more accurately the real character of the Turk. In Armenia and Kurdistan, in the extreme east, the population is

about equally divided into Turks, Kurds, and Armenians. From what I have already said it will be understood that these "Turks" have a very mixed origin. The Kurds, who also are Mohammedans, are equally mixed in blood : both Semitic and Mongol strains are grafted on an Aryan stock akin to the Persians and Armenians. They are a primitive and backward people : brave, hospitable, faithful to their own code of honour, but truculent fighters and not disposed to draw a fine line in regard to the ownership of cattle. The Armenians, on the other hand, a people akin to the Persians and Hindus, have a sharper intelligence and a much better capacity for trade. Their moral qualities seem to give rise to differences of opinion. Sir E. Pears tells us they have "a toughness which prevents their being broken," while Sir W. Ramsay, who is certainly more closely acquainted with them, describes them as "submissive to the verge of servility." It is at all events clear that they are both more intelligent, more industrious, and more resolute in making money than their Moslem neighbours, and, when they began to show restlessness under the rule of the Sultan, this gave Abd ul Hamid his opportunity.

Middlemen and financiers are not popular with a thriftless peasantry, and in Armenia this friction is intensified by religious differences. The Mohammedans are divided into two fiercely hostile sects, the Sunnis and Shias—roughly corresponding to

the Catholic and Protestant division of Christendom—and the Armenians are divided into Gregorian and Roman Catholics, with the additional confusion of recently introduced Protestantism. The Kurds, however, are really the least deeply religious of all, and they regarded the Armenian rather as the Galician peasant regards the Jew money-lender. It may be an act of piety, but it is certainly an act of comfort and profit, to make an end of him. Abd ul Hamid had enlisted the Kurds extensively in his army. The famous Hamidiyah are Kurd cavalry, and there are also Kurd infantry. Their pay was, like that of other Turkish soldiers, always in arrears or not given at all, and they were encouraged to "live on the country." To a large extent they were little better than brigands, and the Christians were, naturally, their chief victims. When the Armenians stirred, the Sultan let loose these fierce regiments upon the country and they created an appalling desolation. Even the Kurds, however, have their virtues, and the interesting picture which is given us by two English ladies—Mrs. de Bunsen and Mrs. Wilkins—who travelled over the whole region, is rather an indictment of the foul Turkish administration than of the people. A blight covers the land where once the Babylonian, the Persian, and the Arab established great civilisations, and the courtesy and hospitality which one encounters are perhaps more remarkable than the disorder and the fierce elementary passion,¹ accentuated by religious

hatred, of which one hears. Sir E. Pears tells us of Moslem priests who vehemently protested against the massacres and tried to check them.

In Armenia, in any case, we have rather a struggle of two Aryan peoples, the Kurd and the Armenian. Let us turn to the other wing of the Empire, where outrages have been committed decade after decade. The next chapter will discuss more closely the character of the Balkan peoples, but I may observe here that any reader of Miss Durham's photographic work, *The Burden of the Balkans*, will recognise that in that region truculence is confined neither to one race nor one religion. Centuries of Turkish misrule and oppression have lowered the character of the Balkan peoples to a level of impulsive retaliation, and sectarian differences have wrought infinite evil on this primitive temperament. Greek, Slav, Bulgar, Wallach, and Albanian hate each other with elementary passion, and religious differences set people of the same race in deadly antagonism. In no country in the world was it so easy to apply the maxim, "Divide et impera," and no ruler in the world ever had a more cynical regard for that maxim than Abd ul Hamid.

All statistics of the Ottoman Empire are "approximate," but it is calculated that before the last Balkan War there were about a million and a half Osmanli Turks on the European side of the Bosphorus. In that land of extraordinarily mixed nationalities it would be particularly futile to regard

this figure—slender as it is—as correct ; but the popular impression that the troubles in the Balkans mean the occasional rending of the Christian population by these million Turks is very far astray. At the time of the great massacres of forty years ago there were peculiar reasons for ferocity. The advance of Russia had driven a large number of Tartars and about 700,000 Circassians into the Turkish Empire, and the Sultan had provided for most of these by ordering his Christian subjects in Europe to build houses for them and share their best pastures with them. The resultant sentiment can be imagined. The Circassian is a handsome and picturesque ruffian. His ideals may be gathered from the ease with which he flooded the Turkish market with his daughters when he found their beauty appreciated. Transplantation from his purely Mohammedan world into this atmosphere of fierce sectarian passions did not tend to mitigate his native pugnacity, and the fact that he was dishonestly imposed on the land did not promote friendly relations with his Christian neighbours. When, therefore, the Sultan declared that these Balkan Christians were rebels against Moslem authority, he fell on them with primitive ardour. The other great offender, the Bashi-Bazuk, was an unpaid and low-type irregular in the Turkish service, and frequently a Kurd or an Albanian.

To understand the more recent outrages, in Macedonia, one must study in Miss Durham's

pages the temper of all the varied inhabitants of that region. There is not much disposition in any of them to recognise the restrictions imposed by Hague Conferences. Indeed, one can imagine a Turk of our time closing the discussion by asking us to reflect on the conduct which his Austrian ally, who subscribed to the Hague conventions, has recently perpetrated in Serbia, and his German ally in Poland and Belgium. The righteous Englishman himself would be a little surprised if he attempted to persuade these Balkan buccaneers of the impropriety of their ways. Among the many piquant sketches in Miss Durham's valuable works is one of a conversation which she had in London with an Albanian Bashi-Bazuk who had strangely settled there. He enlarged with horror on the many and mighty forms of wickedness he found in London, and he contrasted them with the quick sense of honour and justice one found in his native Balkans !

However, it suffices for my present purpose to point out that in this western wing of the Ottoman Empire there are relatively few Turks, and that these are of very mixed blood—in large numbers of cases they are demonstrably men of other races with a thin Moslem varnish—and live in a very evil environment. To assign the primary responsibility for these outrages on humanity, apart from the heavy and open guilt of the palace clique and the officials, or to divide it in just proportions between the various races involved, is an utter im-

possibility. These complications do not exist in Asia Minor, where it is calculated that there are seven million Osmanli Turks out of a total population of ten millions. In the cities of the coast there is, naturally, a great confusion of races, and the Turk is in a minority. In Smyrna, where half the population is Greek, the Turks are in a minority of one-fifth : even in Constantinople there are only 400,000 Turks out of a total population of a million and a quarter. The vices of Constantinople, with its 400,000 Greeks and Armenians, and its swarms of Jews, Gypsies, Bulgars, Kurds, Albanians, Italians, Syrians, and Circassians, are less characteristic of Turkey than the vices of any other metropolis are characteristic of the nation to which it belongs.

In the interior of Asia Minor you find the Turk normally developed and purest in blood, and since the day when that part of the world was first opened to Christian travellers they have not ceased to express a naïve surprise at the discovery that he possesses quite ordinary virtues and graces of character. There is so general a disposition in our age to regard alcohol as the root of all evil that one might have expected some degree of character in a people that is forbidden to taste it. But it is not claimed that the Turk is exalted above the Christian peoples in the general practice of virtue. In business-relations he is admitted to be more honest and truthful than either Jew, Greek, or Armenian ; and he greets even the Christian visitor with a courtesy.

hospitality, and respect which the visitor would never expect, and rarely receive, in his own land. In his domestic world he is affectionate, generally faithful, and kind to his children ; and so far is he from instinctive cruelty that the behaviour of a south Italian or a Spaniard toward animals would outrage his feelings. The teaching of the Koran on all these points is admirable, and no people, as a body, is more faithful to its sacred code, or devotes more hours to religion. Violence, cruelty, and hypocrisy, which many regard as essential qualities of the Turk, are at least as exceptional in Asia Minor as they are in any European civilisation. The Turk has, on the contrary, a strong sense of honour, of courtesy, of dignity, and of benevolence. One should read Lady Ramsay's *Everyday Life in Turkey* (1897) or Mrs. de Bunsen's *Soul of a Turk* (1910) : two estimates of Turkish character written by English Christian ladies who saw and appreciated the Turk in his home. The works of Sir W. Ramsay and Sir Edwin Pears, and other authorities, do not dissent from these estimates.

That the Turk has grave and characteristic defects will not be questioned, but those are very generally due to the system of misgovernment under which he suffers. I am not, of course, forgetting that this system was invented by, and is enforced by, Turks. No censure can be too severe for the rulers of the Ottoman Empire and their counsellors. It does not excuse them to plead that they inherited

this corrupt system from the Byzantine Christians whom they superseded, and that it still flourishes, in some of its features, in Spain : the Spaniard, indeed, might retort that it is not unknown in New York and Chicago. The retention of the system, in all its fulness and crudeness, by the Turkish leaders in modern times was and is criminal, however arduous a task it may be to alter it. But this impeachment affects relatively few of the Turks. The general defect of the system is that officials are not paid, or are insufficiently paid, and they have recourse to bribery and exaction. The Turk suffers from this as well as the Christian, and we can but trust that the "Young Turks" will, after this final catastrophe to their nation, set their hands to the work of reform more vigorously than they have hitherto done.

We are more concerned, however, with the ordinary Turk—with the mass of the Turks—and we must judge his character in relation to the system under which he lives. The maxim that every people has the government which it deserves is absurd. The large and general progress which has been made in the political life of Europe during the last hundred years is not merely due to the moral advance of each nation. A dozen nations have aided and stimulated each other. The political system of England was corrupt and abominable forty years after the French Revolution : the political system of the Papal States was still gross thirty

years later : and the political system of Spain and Russia is gross to-day. But there has been a general diffusion of ideas, and it at last dawns on the mind of the mass of the people that they deserve a better system of government than they have.

The Turks, as a body, have been isolated by their creed, their ignorance, and their geographical position from this stimulating education of Europe. Their rulers, spiritual and secular, took advantage of their situation, on the fringe of the civilised world, to exclude the faint echoes of European revolutions and evolutions. One meets Turks who do not know of the existence of England or France, to say nothing of the English Reform Bill or the French Revolution. Even to-day the great mass of the elementary schools of Turkey are controlled by the mosques, and they are used chiefly to inculcate those commands of the Koran which make a man blindly submissive to the established order and suspicious of innovations. Their supreme lesson is that what is and happens, is and happens by the will of Allah ; and the second lesson is that the Moslem will assuredly learn no good from the *giaoue*. We need not go back to the Middle Ages for parallels to this conspiracy of priest and ruler to keep the masses in ignorant subjection. There was plenty of it in England less than a century ago, and there is plenty in Spain and Russia to-day.

In view of the retention in Turkey of this once general system, we cannot affect to be surprised

at the apparent listlessness of the ordinary Turk. He seems to the superficial visitor to lack spirit and initiative. There is an air of decay and dilapidation about his towns in Asia Minor, and he submits to the corrupt and oppressive administration and the baneful rule of the Sultan with a patience that disgusts the European visitor : who is, as a rule, ignorant that his own grandfather would have excited just such a disgust in some visitor from a more advanced world. Neither the primitive agriculture and transit and industry nor the political apathy of the Turk points to decay or enervation. It is due to ignorance, for which he is not to blame, and to the fact that all the positive instruction he has received impressed on him from boyhood the duty of submission. He has not, in theology, the subtlety of the western Christian, because he has not had to struggle against critics. If Allah rules the world, it is good : there is a suspicion of blasphemy in these plans for bettering it. As a rule, however, he knows no more about plans of betterment than he does about steam-ploughs or electric drills. He is not refractory to western ideas, but his priests and rulers take good care that he does not know them.

All this is, of course, changing : probably the next generation will smile at our idea of the " Asiatic somnolence " of the Turk just as we smile at our fathers' idea of the Japanese. Evolution is proceeding normally in the case of the Turk, though it

has only just begun. The middle class must adopt the modern ideal, and in time invite the mass to share it. Until a few years ago there was no university even at Constantinople. That was a fortunate blunder of the authorities, since it drove young men, whose imaginations were stimulated by visitors from the west, to Rome and Paris for education. When they returned with modern ideas, they were persecuted and hounded much as such young men had been in Austria and Italy two generations earlier. We shall see presently how they evaded and outwitted the authorities, how the work of education went on rapidly in spite of armies of spies and informers. Even among Turkish women one finds a growing culture to-day. To the average Turk of Asia Minor, however, these things are still dimly apprehended and gravely suspected novelties. On the one hand, he sees this new culture (if he knows anything of it) associated with the numerous Christian colleges which have been built for the express purpose of destroying Islam : on the other hand, the middle class—it has been the same in Europe—is apt to think that its work is done when power and opportunity are transferred from the aristocracy to itself.

These things we may consider later. For the moment we have merely to understand the character of the Turk, and it is plain that to assign this or that feature of his life to some occult quality of his blood or nerve, and ignore his intellectual environ-

ment, is a blunder as common as it is unscientific. To the same cause we must refer his treatment of woman. Probably the average English idea of a Turkish woman is that she lies all day on silk cushions, beside a marble basin, eating sweetmeats. This kind of harem-life is becoming far less common than it was even among the rich, but it was always infinitely removed from the life of the average Turkish woman. Recent travellers, indeed, are apt to pass to the other extreme and charge the Turk with imposing all the work on his wife. They would probably find as much woman-labour on the fields in Belgium as in Asia Minor, yet there is no doubt that the Turk has, as a rule, an unjust attitude towards women. In this again he is merely lingering a generation or two behind the west, and is beginning to change. I do not refer merely to the decay of polygamy, which is a matter of social custom rather than morals. Along the usual tracks of development—from the cultivated middle class to the more travelled or less ignorant workers—new ideals and sentiments are spreading. The *yashmah* is disappearing in many parts of Turkey. In fact, earlier male visitors to Turkey, who could never enter the *haremluk*, have given us exaggerated ideas. Ladies like Lady Ramsay and Mrs. de Bunsen, who were cordially welcomed everywhere into the women's quarters, give us a not unattractive picture of the Turkish women. The mother, in particular, holds a re-

spected place in the home of a grown son. Polygamy is very little known among the poor, and is not the rule among those who could afford it. The woman is generally mistress in the home, and cases of brutal treatment of wives by coarse and ignorant husbands are less frequent than in the corresponding stratum of the English population.

Other defects of the Turk may similarly be traced to his environment, especially his religious environment. If the Koran, on the one hand, makes him cleanly and hospitable, it makes him also particularly inflammable on the religious side. That is a not uncommon defect of sacred books, which, like the Koran, reflect a stage in the development of a people before it attains complete civilisation ; and the Koran has not had, like the Old Testament, a supplement at a later stage of evolution. One must not, however, imagine that a Turk is in a chronic state of anti-Christian ardour, or prepared to consent to any outrage. Even Christian ladies travelling without male escort or official support in Asia Minor have found the Turks most courteous and benevolent, and large numbers of Christians live happily and prosperously in that region. But in the mixed regions it cannot be doubted that the lower type of Moslem has been in part impelled to commit outrages from a religious sentiment : just as Greeks, Bulgars, and Serbs have committed outrages against each other in the same region out of hatred of each others' Christian creeds. At the most

we may say only that the Moslem is as intolerant as his neighbours in that backward corner of the earth, and, if we compare the whole historical record of Islam since the settlement of the Osmanli Turks with the historical record of Christendom, we shall find a far graver and more tragic intolerance on our side.

In fine, to complete the character of the typical Turk, we must notice that he strangely unites the familiar pride of a dominant race with a great measure of childishness and simplicity. His pride of race—or, rather, of religion—is easily understood after our glance at his history. The very influences which find it to their interest to limit his culture are eager enough to acquaint him with the glorious record of his fathers. His not unnatural and, on the whole, harmless conceit seems a little incongruous when we observe the very backward condition of his country and of his culture. His ignorance is profound. Charms and old-wives' recipes are substituted to an appalling extent for medical science, and his primitive ideas of hygiene and sanitation have the most disastrous consequences. His very virtues have a child-like quality, and his astonishment at the most familiar details of modern western life is naïve. In this he is not unlike the Chinese. Only a few centuries ago our fathers looked with the same astonishment at the linen underwear and fine vessels which came to them at times from the more advanced Mohammedans of Spain.

It is, however, not necessary to enlarge on the qualities of the Turk. The point of chief interest to us is that no traveller who is familiar with him in his normal surroundings has ever suggested that he is innately cruel, hypocritical, dishonest, or dis honourable. One has only to reflect that his defects are those of the Middle Ages to see that they are connected, not with his blood, but with his environment. He is, in some few respects, in a condition of arrested development, and his geographical position must be carefully weighed in appreciating this. There are parts of the west of Ireland, of Spain, of southern Italy, and of Russia where the peasantry are in no respect superior to the peasantry of Asia Minor ; and in most features of character the Turks of Asia Minor will compare well with the agricultural population of any country. The more centrally situated races of Europe, open to mutual stimulation and contrast of culture on every side, are merely foolish when they attribute their superiority to some quality of their nature or their religion. We already see ample indications of change in Turkey, and, now that the barriers set up by corrupt rulers and timorous priests have been at last pierced, the change will go on increasingly. It is absurd to speak of the Turk as "unprogressive." Probably only a very few of the lowest peoples of the earth are incapable of progress, or unwilling to enter upon it when the path is disclosed to them.

In this I am not at all pleading for the retention

of the Turk in Europe, and we may now see how his rulers have forfeited their western possessions and crowned their European record with a criminally foolish interference in a quarrel that did not concern them. The story is in some respects pathetic, since a corrupt few have pledged the interests and the honour of the ignorant mass. But of the issue there cannot be two opinions. The Turk has no longer a legitimate place in Europe. Even if he retains Constantinople and a shred of territory, it will be regarded as an Asiatic extension.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, when Napoleon and Alexander discussed the project of dividing the Sultan's dominions between them, he still ruled some eight million souls on European soil. Their condition was abject and pitiful. A hundred years of evil government had degraded the Turkish administration, and the Balkan Christians were overburdened with taxes, refused elementary justice, devastated by armies, and detained in the grossest ignorance. Large numbers of them had become "Turks," and looked down from the more profitable height of Islam on their former fellows. But the thrills which spread through Europe in that passionate age penetrated even the corrupt defences of the Turk and quickened the minds of the down-trodden Slavs and Greeks. The Serbs were the first to rebel, as we shall see in the next chapter, and in 1817, after years of struggle and suffering, they obtained their autonomy under the suzerainty of the

Sultan, who retained his troops in their fortresses. The Greeks next won their independence (1829), the French occupied Algiers (1830), and Mohammed Ali attacked Egypt (1841). The Sultan of the time, Mahmud II (1808–1839), was of a worthier type than his predecessors and was not unwilling to listen to counsels of reform ; but he failed to make the great effort that was needed—though he annihilated the Janissaries in 1826—and his successor, Abd ul Mejid, was a weaker man.

It is possible that Abd ul Mejid, who shrewdly followed the situation in Europe in 1848 and 1849, listened with some cynicism to the demands of the Christian Powers that he should relax his tyranny. Austria was then thirsting for the blood of Kossuth, and the Papacy for that of Mazzini ; and Europe generally was in a state of profound despotic reaction. Abd ul Mejid genially welcomed the fugitive Magyar to Constantinople, and refused to give him up to Austria. The Sultan had given Turkey a Constitution and had promised considerable reforms at the beginning of his reign (1839). Turkish historians like Fahmi gravely maintain that Austria and Russia, in their own interest, or in order that they might have an excuse to intervene, dissuaded the Sultan from carrying out these reforms. But in the absence of documents we may prefer to believe that the Sultan was too weak to enforce his reforms in face of the reluctant clergy. In any case, Russia was steadily advancing, and, although France and

England checked her in the Crimean War (1854-5), she secured the detachment from Turkey, as autonomous provinces, of Moldavia and Wallachia (now Rumania). The two provinces united, under their present name, in 1866, though they were still vassals of the Sultan.

Unhappily the Ottoman throne received at this important period a corrupt and worthless Sultan, Abd ul Aziz, who in turn would be succeeded by Abd ul Hamid. This has been the crowning misfortune of Turkey, for it was during that half century that the other nations of Europe made marked political and social progress, and so found themselves in a position to chide the Sultan with a proper sense of superiority. Abd ul Aziz was an oriental potentate of the old legendary type : an ignorant, luxurious, and entirely unscrupulous despot. Twelve hundred of the prettiest ladies of his Empire adorned his spacious harem, and about six thousand officers were required to sustain the splendour of his establishment. His personal expenditure of about two millions sterling a year exhausted the resources of his badly organised country and added three-quarters of a million to its debt every year. The finances fell into a desperate condition, and the subject peoples of the Balkans, noting the advance of Europe on the one hand and the medieval corruption and rapacity of Constantinople on the other, entered upon the last and most drastic phase of their struggle.

It will be more convenient to examine this

struggle, as far as it concerns us, in the next chapter. The Turkish version is that Greece and Russia and Austria, eager to divide the Balkans between them, intrigued among the Sultan's subjects and impelled them to a futile and bloody rebellion. But the Turkish historians do not conceal or mitigate the criminal luxury and folly of Abd ul Aziz, and we shall see that—certainly with the aid of Russia, Austria, and Greece—the Balkan peoples were rapidly developing their resources and their racial consciousness. Montenegro and Herzegovina rose and were heavily suppressed (1861-3). Serbia then, in 1867, demanded and obtained the withdrawal of Turkish troops from her autonomous territory. The Cretans rebelled and were savagely subdued. Then France, which had protected Turkey, was crushingly defeated by Germany (1871), and Russia set to work more vigorously. Fahmi would have us believe that Russia encouraged the Sultan in his oppression and the Slavs in their resistance ; but he admits that there *was* grave oppression, and perhaps that suffices.

Bosnia and Herzegovina lit the flame of rebellion in 1875, and it spread to Montenegro, Serbia, and Bulgaria. If the Albanians had then joined the rebels, instead of assisting the Sultan, and if the Greeks had lent their aid, it is probable that the Balkan problem would have been solved forty years ago. As it was, the Turks fell savagely on the scattered and imperfectly equipped rebels, and

Europe was soon shuddering at the stories of atrocities. Circassians, Kurds, Albanians, and all the more primitive and fanatical warriors of Islam, were encouraged to use the device of "frightfulness" with indescribable licence. To this day many will remember the "Bulgarian atrocities" of 1876 : and there was, of course, no restraint on the side of the rebels. Even England was now forced by public opinion, which was fired by the eloquence of Gladstone, to abandon the Turk and insist on reform. Abd ul Aziz was deposed by his apprehensive ministers, and his liberal-minded nephew, Murad V, was put on the throne. But the ill-balanced prince lost his reason under the strain within three months, and Abd ul Hamid II, his brother, was substituted for him in the last month of 1876.

"Abdul the Damned" had a more complex personality and a greater ability than the general public imagines, but his later record and deposition dispense us from studying his character. He was an extremely sober and industrious man. At once he discharged half the gay army of women and officers from Yildiz Kiosk, and throughout his career he devoted the most careful attention to the details of government. He did not a little for his sinking country ; but his repulsive callousness to outrage and his cynical reliance on the jealousies of the Christian Powers put him beyond defence. The Balkans were aflame, and the representatives of the Powers were gathering at Constantinople, when he acceded to the throne, and he at once displayed his character-

istic method. He republished the Constitution of Abd ul Mejid and promised a parliamentary régime, general education, the reform of justice, and freedom of the press. The Parliament actually held two sittings, but the protests of reactionary Moslems against its threats of innovation gave the Sultan a becoming pretext, and he dissolved it on February 5th.

The truth was, of course, that the reforming Powers failed to agree, and the danger of foreign interference seemed to be over. But Russia now undertook the work itself, and in the war of 1877 inflicted a severe defeat on the Turks. By the Treaty of San Stefano Russia exacted the restoration of the ancient kingdom of Bulgaria on a grandiose scale, reaching from the Black Sea to the Ægean, and entirely ignoring the claims of the other Balkan peoples. To this England demurred, and the settlement was referred to the Berlin Congress (1878). Montenegro (which had never been subdued), Servia, and Rumania were now recognised as independent States : Bulgaria became independent, though not nearly so large as Russia had intended : Thessaly was given to Greece : and Bosnia and Herzegovina were (as I explained in the last chapter) assigned to the care of Austria. There can be no doubt that this, however imperfect, was a far juster settlement, and it is mere petulance on the part of some American writers to censure the action of England. It is true that we then declared ourselves protectors of the Turk's Asiatic dominion, and that the chief motive was a concern to check Russia. But the pro-

posal of Russia would, as we see to-day, have provoked a furious conflict of the Balkan peoples ; and even the Bulgarians were so little convinced of the disinterestedness of Russia's action that they began to resist Russian influence some years later. However that may be, the Sultan lost twelve million subjects and 138,000 square miles of territory in Europe ; and the Balkan peoples entered upon a more rapid and more peaceful development.

With the abandonment of the parliamentary régime the power at Constantinople passed again to the corrupt officials and apprehensive clergy who surrounded Abd ul Hamid, and the familiar features of his reign were developed. His army of spies and agents cost the country, it is estimated, a million sterling a year, and a fierce struggle was maintained against the spread of enlightenment. The prisons were filled with his more progressive and more critical subjects, both Moslem and Christian, and large numbers went into exile in the desolate regions of Mesopotamia and North Africa. But numbers of these reformers (the so-called "Young Turks") maintained their liberty in the various capitals of Europe and succeeded in smuggling advanced literature into the country. They strove also to inflame the growing resentment in Europe of the Sultan's treatment of his Christian subjects, and they painted in lurid colours, in the press of Italy, France, and England, the atrocities that were still committed. In the eighties and nineties the Armenians were constantly rebelling against unjust treatment, and, as I

have previously stated, the Sultan cynically discharged the impoverished and hostile Kurds upon them. The Christian Powers vainly urged reform : a whole decade of massacre and pillage added to the dreariness of the region where Assyria and Persia had once flourished. In Constantinople itself, where, in 1896, the Armenians were so ill-advised as to attack the Imperial Ottoman Bank, three thousand of them were slain. Crete rebelled, and secured a Christian governor and parliamentary representation. The Arabs of the Yemen were in revolt for many years.

But all the other troubles of Turkey were overshadowed by the appalling anarchy which was caused in Macedonia, and here at last we find the beginning of the fatal complicity of Turkey with Germany and Austria. The inner meaning of the trouble in Macedonia we may consider in the next chapter. The primary condition of it was, assuredly, the incompetence and corruption of the Turkish administration, but it was by no means a mere question of Moslem oppressing Christian. There is no Macedonian race. The land is peopled by representatives of the four races of the Balkan Peninsula, and by vast numbers of individuals in whom the blood of the various races is mingled ; and, as the century drew to a close and the prospect of ejecting the Turk from this last province became clearer, the four races entered upon a tense intrigue and regarded each other with truculent suspicion. The story of the medieval greatness of each race was now

enthusiastically studied ; every peasant became a fiery politician, eager to assert the full rights of his ancient and now restored kingdom. Both Bulgars and Greeks claimed the whole province, while Serbs and Albanians struggled against their intrigues and claimed their own share. The "Macedonian" himself, not a keen-witted peasant at the best of times, and now dazed by the intrigues of Greek and Serb and Bulgar, seems to have understood only that the revolution he was urged to set afoot would free him from taxation for ever. Meantime the Turk was in possession, and, when the Macedonian Committee started the futile and lamentable revolt, Abd ul Hamid launched his customary forces against it, and the land reeked with atrocities. Serbs and Bulgars waged desperate war on each other as well as on the Turk, and the fierce Albanian, who had in the meantime quarrelled with Turkey, turned his Martini alike upon Christian and Moslem, Greek and Slav.

I am concerned with these things only in so far as they bear upon the "unprogressive" temper of the Turk. In point of fact, much progress had been made in Turkey, and the trouble in Macedonia was not, as superficial observers said, a mere recrudescence of Moslem fanaticism. It was a struggle of rival races, and a quite obvious struggle for territory. But there was a deeper cause for the cynicism with which Abd ul Hamid and his friends now sent their worst soldiers into the arena, and it brings us to the last phase of Turkish history.

In the year 1898 William II visited the Holy Land, "for the salvation of our soul only," as he carefully announced. His meditations seem to have been varied by a careful study of the east and a shrewd appreciation of its possible services to Germany. His genial intercourse with the Sultan did not lead to any check of the Armenian and Macedonian outrages ; it ended rather in a material advantage to Germany—the consent of the Turks to the construction of a railway to Bagdad—and in the discovery by the Sultan that he had a friend and supporter in one of the chief Powers. England was honourably ceasing to support Turkey and approaching nearer to Russia. Germany, the idealist race, was prepared, for a consideration, to take the place of England and support the worst and most sanguinary ruler of modern times. The railway system which Germany sought to promote might serve, incidentally, the pious purpose of helping good Moslems to reach Mecca. It would at least open out and develop a rich economic field and, in case of war with England and Russia, it would have a very high strategical value. With German officers to bring them up to date and German railways to quicken their slow mobilisation, the brave but scattered Turks might become a formidable force, and might, in the event of a European war, keep English and Russian troops profitably distracted in the east.

It was a scheme after the heart of Abd ul Hamid, who does not seem to have suspected that Germany might use Armenian troubles some day to assert a

protectorate over his rich and undeveloped dominion. What it immediately meant to the Sultan was that Germany and Austria would not interfere with his peculiar methods of governing. Whether William II already had in mind the co-operation of Turkey against England is a matter of conjecture: but German writers discussed the point freely a few years later. What is known is that since that time Germany has made no effort to restrain the Sultan. When, in 1905, the other Powers pressed reform on him in the only language which he could understand and respect—a naval demonstration—Germany was conspicuously absent.

The interest of Austria differed from that of Germany, and for a time she went her own way. In 1903 she agreed with Russia to enforce a certain scheme of reforms (the Mürzsteg Program) in Macedonia. We need not study the inadequacy of the machinery which they set up. In 1904 the attention of Russia was entirely diverted from the near to the far East, and, when Japan apparently proved to the world that Russia was not so formidable as she looked, Austria basely deserted her trust. Like Germany, Austria took from the Sultan a railway concession (in the direction of the Macedonian coast) and restored to him his liberty to commit outrages. The burning of villages and the racial pandemonium continued in Macedonia. Austria, as we saw, boldly appropriated Bosnia and Herzegovina and awaited the issue.

It is not difficult to imagine the effect upon the

corrupt Turks of this new situation. Now that Russia was crippled, and Austria and Germany stretched a friendly line between Turkey and France and England, there was little to fear. Abd ul Hamid was not, as is sometimes said, an ardent Pan-Islamist, but he probably hoped that the development of his Empire for him by Germany would strengthen Islam and make him a partner, not a victim, of Pan-Germanism. But Abd ul Hamid and his ministers and counsellors were not Turkey, and the progressive spirit which was bound to assert itself sooner or later was now embodied in a shape which astonished Europe. In the month of July, 1908, the Sultan was forced by a Turkish Revolution to abandon his corrupt system and institute a parliamentary régime.

The Young Turks who were scattered over Europe had, like Mazzini in the fifties, succeeded in carrying on the work of education from abroad. In effect they were the great majority of the educated Turks of the last and of this generation. So far from being unprogressive, they almost all adopted western ideas when they had the opportunity of studying them, and a very large number of them made great sacrifices for the sake of delivering their country from the old régime. To any person who has discussed modern issues with educated Japanese, Chinese, Hindus, and Turks, the idea of their having some peculiar mental complexion which unfits them for western culture is absurd. Large numbers of them abandoned Islam altogether, and became Posi-

tivists, Voltaireans, or liberal-minded theists. The army was both the instrument they needed and the best soil for their gospel of discontent, as it was unfed, unpaid, and scurvily treated. The Young Turks captured the Macedonian troops, formed a "Committee of Union and Progress," and in a remarkably short time forced Abd ul Hamid to yield. The army of spies was disbanded, the fetters were removed from the press, and a Chamber of 280 Deputies met at Constantinople. Europe, still hugging its theory of the unprogressive Oriental, professed (as it had done after the Japanese Revolution and would do after the Chinese Revolution) a great astonishment at the rapidity and ease of the Revolution.

A splendid, if too effervescent, enthusiasm seized the Ottoman Empire. Moslems and Christians fell on each other's necks and swore eternal brotherhood : assisted at each other's religious services and lauded each other's priests. Corrupt old officials were forced to disgorge into the public treasury : one, who had been in office only eighteen months, was discovered to have a hoard of £120,000. The administration was comprehensively reformed : the German supporters of Abd ul Hamid looked grave : the English were hailed as brothers. And in less than eight months Abd ul Hamid organised a successful counter-Revolution and restored the old régime. In a few months more the Young Turks returned with an army, deposed Abd ul Hamid, and put on the throne his younger brother Reschad, or Mohammed V. And from that date England has

lost influence in Turkey, Germany has had great and increasing influence, the work of reform has been almost neglected, and the country has advanced from disaster to disaster. Austria annexed Bosnia and Herzegovina : Italy defeated the Turks in Tripoli : the Balkan kingdoms swept them out of Macedonia, and they lost Albania and Crete : and, as I write, England annexes Egypt, the Franco-British fleet is smashing the forts of the Dardanelles, and Russia creeps nearer from the north.

I need consider only the development of these Young Turks, the middle class of the country, in whom every friend of the Turk had placed a warm hope of redemption. Their success and failure have been repeatedly analysed, but a few features of importance are not generally appreciated. Their success was due to the fact that they captured the army, and this contained an element of weakness. The troops had, in the main, no sympathy with their general ideals and co-operated only in an effort to get better treatment. With the old régime as a whole they had no quarrel ; and the reactionaries, who hungered for their flesh-pots, and the gold of Abd ul Hamid, sought to profit by their general fidelity to Islam. A number of the reformers were Positivists, Jews, and Freethinkers, and, although the language of their manifestoes was conspicuously pious, the deep religious prejudice of the mass was stirred against them. Soldiers were assured that the Revolution had been engineered by Christians and atheists, and that Christians would now gain commands and com-

missions in the army. The Young Turks retorted by measures which irritated the Christians, and, on the German model, they began a process of Turkification which stirred the Albanians also to rebel. Heavy taxes were needed to realise reforms : experienced men were few, and old officials had to be engaged : the Revolution was too rapid for some and not rapid enough for others. There was the inevitable split, and a party of "Liberals" arose in opposition to the Committee of Union and Progress.

Abd ul Hamid was able to profit by the confusion, but the Committee rallied the army and put an end to his reign. But England had made the mistake of supporting the Liberals against the Committee. Germany, more ably represented at Constantinople, supported (and probably aided financially) the Committee both against the Liberals and the Sultan. With the triumphant return to power of the Committee, therefore, Germany practically undertook the direction of its army and its policy, and the promise of the Revolution was blighted. Mohammed V is a weak nonentity. Abd ul Hamid had so sternly watched his earlier life that he had been afraid to look at a journal for twenty years.

But, corrupt and selfish as the influence of Germany was, it does not relieve the Young Turks of responsibility, and a last word must be said of this grave failure of the Turkish middle class. The administrative abuses were retained, or allowed to return, and the resources which ought to have

been used in developing the unfortunate Asiatic provinces were squandered on the army and on officials. The trouble continued in Macedonia until the Balkan kingdoms united and defeated the Ottoman troops. For this failure it is easy to assign many causes. The reformers of Portugal have been more successful, it is true, but they have by no means realised their ideals. Every rapid revolution encounters terrific obstacles, especially when the evils are so deep-rooted and the people so perversely educated as in Turkey. European journalists who speak so lightly of Turkish or Portuguese failure would be a little astonished to read the history of their own countries and learn how slow and difficult was the change from aristocracy to constitutionalism in England, France, and Germany.

We understand how the reformers were hampered by their dissensions, their lack of funds, their need to humour old prejudices, and the peculiar delicacy of converting a theocracy into a secular State—one would almost say, a religion into a nationality. There are, however, less pardonable aspects of the failure, and they must be presented. The Young Turks were not all idealists. There were many among them who had found zeal for reform easy when they were in exile, but not so easy when they were in power. The Revolution had worked to their advantage : further progress in reform would not. That, too, is human, and not unknown in the history of the nineteenth century, and even in contemporary life. Generally speaking,

the reforms of the nineteenth century were won by the middle class : further reforms must be won by another class. The Turks are compressing the long experience of other nations into a decade. It is probable also that the Young Turks are infected with the German gospel : first power, then liberty and justice. Some day we may know what William II and Francis Joseph promised them : most probably an indemnity which would, at small cost, form a glorious capital for the development of Turkey in Asia. Some strong lying, some culpable remissness on our part, must have been needed to induce the Young Turk to embark on so hopeless an adventure.

There is every reason to expect that the Turk will yet become a great Power, in Asia. Whether or no he retains Constantinople, with a small Hinterland in Europe and the Dardanelles disarmed—for which there is much to be said—his future lies in Asia. Twenty years of peaceful and vigorous enterprise—education, religious tolerance, irrigation, improved agriculture and transit, and exploitation of minerals—would redeem his dishonour and ensure for him respectful consideration. His faults, I trust I have shown, are due to his environment, and he is as capable as any of progress. It is not improbable that he will cease to look with covetous eyes on the lands he has forfeited, and that in twenty years the European who passes in luxurious trains along the Mesopotamian railway will survey a land of peace and prosperity.

CHAPTER IV

THE BALKAN CAULDRON

Origin of the Balkan peoples—Early civilisations of the Serb and the Bulgar—Arrest of their development by the Turkish conquest—Their souls “trodden by herds of buffaloes”—Character-studies of the Serb, Montenegrin, Albanian, and Bulgar—Clocks stopped at the Middle Ages—The modern revival—The Serb advance—The assassination of Alexander and Draga—Spirit of modern Serbia—Advance in Bulgaria and Rumania—Brightness of the Balkan capitals—The shadow of Austria and Russia—The Macedonian question, the Greek, and the Albanian.

A GLANCE at a relief map of Europe and Asia gives one the impression that some mighty force has pushed the crust of the earth northward, from the direction of the tropics, and thrown it into the mass of puckers and folds, of hilly regions and mountain chains, which stretches from the Pyrenees to the Himalaya. There has, in point of fact, been some such warping of the crust, and, as part of that process, the Balkan Peninsula has had its earlier spreading plains crushed and wrinkled into the hills and valleys of to-day. This crumpling of the face of the earth has proved a singular prelude to human history in that region. Time after time the peoples scattered over the area have been thrown into similar confusion by the shock of some powerful invader. Greek and Roman first disturbed the primitive population : Slav, Hun, Teuton, Hun-

garian, Turk, and Venetian came in later ages to increase the disorder : German, Hungarian, Russian, and Italian threaten to repeat the process in modern times. The Balkan peoples of to-day are the bruised survivors of this long and deforming pressure.

It is one of the main contentions of this book that environment counts for immeasurably more than race in the character of a people. Its history, its creed, its occupations, its climate, its geographical position—its entire physical and mental environment, in a word, is the great agency which has shaped its character. Nowhere is this more clearly seen than in the case of the Balkan peoples, and in no other case is it so imperative for us to correct the erroneous judgment of a more superficial and less candid generation. No one in our day will question the importance of breeding. The achievements of the modern selectionist attest it too plainly. But we have not reached the point of altering the character of a people by such means, and we have, on the other hand, evidence furnished by every page of history of the deep influence of environment. Man is not an immutable type, breeding his unchanging features generation after generation. Somehow his environment shapes his character. A creed or a culture borrowed from a neighbour may transform a people. Adversity may make the peaceful truculent, and prosperity may make the truculent weak and pacific. History is full of such

transformations, yet even in our time men are still apt to write, as Carlyle did, of eternal types as well as eternal verities. The Balkan peoples have suffered more than any in Europe from this superficial misjudgment, and it is essential, both in justice to them and out of regard for the peace of Europe, to understand thoroughly their character and their aspirations.

I said on an earlier page that the soul of the Serb, like the soul of the Czech, is revolt. In a sense that is true also of the Bulgar, the Ruman, and the Albanian, and it endorses the correct element of the blundering popular idea. Not many years ago an experienced traveller entitled his description of his journey in the Balkans *Through Savage Europe*, and he insisted that he found there the features which one usually expects and encounters among what we call savages. To the general public, whose knowledge is limited to sensational news in cheap journals, popular novels, and bioscopic views of natives in fancy dress with small arsenals of weapons in their belts, Balkania is a land of children and brigands and atrocities. This is largely true. The knowledge of the mass of the people in such vital matters as disease, diet, sanitation, and religion is infantile, and in their graver faults they are only children into whose hands we have put the weapons of the adult: for our own profit. They love fire-arms, and love to use them. Some of them have the most primitive codes of

conduct—the blood-feud, for instance—and the most primitive habits. Yet the difference between their psychology and that of the savage is profound. When you refuse civilised institutions to a people for ages, primitive instincts will have their way : when you oppress a people for ages, you develop above all, if it has any spirit, its combative instinct. The change which has come over Cettinje or Belgrade or Sofia in thirty years ought to be a sufficient warning to us.

But the Balkan problem is not so simple as this. If its population were one race or people which had been crushed and dwarfed by centuries of Turkish oppression, we might justly expect the problem to solve itself now that the oppressor is dismissed. Instead of this we find, amidst all the signs of progress, four races breathing hatred of each other and disposed, apparently, to turn against each other the old fierceness which we understood so well when the Turk dominated them. People wonder whether, after all, there is not some quality of the blood and the race, some incurable or very slowly curable trait of character, which separates them from us. There is not ; and just as their history explains their spirit toward the Turk, it explains also their continued combativeness and every detail of their moral physiognomy. An essay on the character of the Balkan peoples must be almost entirely historical.

This history has been written many times of late,

and I will choose only the details and phases which assist my inquiry. The first light falls on the Balkan Peninsula when Philip of Macedon begets imperialist ambition, and more or less—we cannot trace his action very accurately—extends his sway over a number of primitive peoples to the north, whom the old historians call Illyrians and Thracians. The Greeks probably disturbed the old population little, but the Romans, who next appeared, had a more important influence. They extended their civilisation to the Danube, and beyond, and drew large numbers of their troops from the old population. It is probable that the Slavs had already begun to flow over the region and mix with the old population, and we know that the Romans established large numbers of colonists and ex-soldiers, especially in the region which we now call Rumania. These early movements give us two elements of the actual population. The Albanians are the purest survivors of the older European race, though it is clear that they have largely mingled with the later Slavs ; the Rumans or Wallachs, as I previously explained, claim to be the descendants of the ancient Romans, but they have probably far more Turki and Slav blood in their veins than Italian. We must remember, however, that in the province of psychology a belief is more powerful than a fact.

When Rome withdrew and fell, the Slavs moved in great bodies into the Danube region and practically absorbed the population. That stream of the

great Slav race which we know as the Serbs—"Servian" is an English corruption of their name, which they dislike—begins early in the Christian era to pour through Galicia into the Danube plains, and in the sixth and seventh centuries it covered the whole region as far as the lower Alps in the west and the frontier of Greece in the south. These Serbs were, comparatively, a peaceful, democratic, highly social people. An agricultural people, rooted to the soil, naturally develops these qualities. It is the pastoral people or the hunting people, roaming over large areas, which comes more frequently into hostile contact with neighbours, develops pugnacity, and converts its bravest or shrewdest fighters into chiefs and kings. The Serbs were agricultural. Families clung together—and do still in parts of Serbia—and lived a brotherly community-life. War was an occasional necessity imposed on them. They did not appreciate fighting as a highly-seasoned part of the diet of life, and did not magnify warriors into despotic chiefs. In peace and liberty they bred richly and spread over the fairer lands and along the valleys. The Albanians were driven to the hills, and the Wallachs were absorbed.

But, as we saw in studying Austria, invaders were pouring constantly into the fertile area from west and from east, and the Slavs had to fight for their lands. In the seventh century, when Huns and Avars had retired again to Asia, the Bulgars pressed through the eastern gate from Russia :

another race of wild Turki horsemen, with the baggy trousers and the harem of the Asiatic, with warrior-chiefs and a painful familiarity with the sword. Before this fierce and irresistible invasion the Slavs were in part driven to the limits of the available area, but their numbers were so vast that they at last virtually absorbed the Asiatic. Only a few words, a few names of kings, remain in Bulgar tradition to tell of the Asiatic origin of the race. The Turki has been lost in the Slav. No doubt a Serb, and some others, would say that a lingering quantity of Turki blood betrays itself in the greater fierceness of the Bulgar, but we find no such permanent heat in the blood of the Hungarian or the Turk. There are only such shades of difference between the character of the Serb and the Bulgar as we may easily attribute to their different fortunes.

The Bulgars, who had come from the banks of the Volga, settled chiefly in the country they occupy to-day, but they were formidable and aggressive warriors, with a very primitive code of military behaviour, and they spread on every side until their new empire stretched from the Adriatic to Constantinople, from the Danube to the Mediterranean. On its fringes were the peoples whom they had displaced and embittered: the Serbs in Serbia (or what was left of it), Montenegro, Bosnia, and Herzegovina, the Albanians on the south-western coast, the Greeks in the south and at Constantinople. All this early history, we must remember, is studied

with enthusiasm in the modern Balkans. The peasant of Wessex would listen as placidly as an ox if you mentioned to him the names of his ancient kings, and he knows no more about the ancient battle-fields than do the sheep that browse on them. It is very different in the Balkans. The new renascence means to each of the four races that it trusts to have its ancient kingdom entirely restored : and so many places belonged in turn to Albanian, Greek, Serb, and Bulgar that there is a deadly clash of ambitions. These races have imagination and can live in the past. The Serb on the mountains of modern Montenegro and in Serbia looks on “ the barbaric Bulgar ”—or “ the thick-headed Scythian,” as the Albanian calls him—with the same disdain as his fathers did a thousand years ago ; and the Albanian and the Greek look upon both as *parvenus*, and are detested by both.

The conversion of these peoples to Christianity in the ninth century did not moderate their sentiments toward each other. Their early apostles, who were sincerely Christian men, tried the experiment of giving them a “ bowdlerised ” edition of the Old Testament, suppressing chapters which would seem to consecrate the sword, but such liberties cannot long be taken with sacred books. They came from the Greek Church, and, although the Bulgars have at various periods bargained shamelessly with Rome and Constantinople, and both Serbs and Bulgars have independent Churches, the mass of the Slavs

belong still to the Greek Orthodox Church. But the Serbs on the Austrian and Hungarian frontier (who are known as Croats) and the Albanians opposite the Italian coast were evangelised from Roman Catholic lands, and a new element of conflict was introduced. Our more tolerant age has little conception of the fierce hatred of Latin and Greek for each other in the early Middle Ages ; and the Middle Ages survive in Balkania.

At the end of the ninth century the Hungarians drove their wedge between the northern and southern Slavs, and began to play their part in the grinding and crumpling of the Balkan peoples. The ceaseless warfare weakened the Bulgars : the Serbs recovered their independence, and the Byzantines for a time conquered the Bulgars. But the Greeks were so reduced by the disreputable conduct of the Crusaders in the thirteenth century that the Bulgars regained their liberty, and for a time Serbia and Bulgaria prospered independently. Their respective historians award them a brilliant civilisation at this period, and undoubtedly they absorbed a good deal of the Byzantine culture. The Greek Emperors intermarried with their royal families. But the pictures which the Greek chroniclers give us of the Serbian and Bulgarian courts do not suggest anything like the grade of civilisation which the native traditions suggest. They were, at least, powerful and prosperous, and we find the great Pope Innocent III making very eager and very

futile efforts to secure their allegiance to Rome. In the fourteenth century the Serbs defeated their rivals, and the Bulgarian kingdom disappeared until the nineteenth century. Serbia, on the other hand, extended its rule over Albania and the greater part of Macedonia, and lifted the cultural condition of the Peninsula to a higher level. To this day the Serb peasant will glow with pride if you mention the great Stephan Dushan (1336-1356) who raised his kingdom to the highest point of its power.

And to this day the Serb annually mourns the battle of Kossovo which, only thirty-three years after the death of Dushan, shattered his kingdom and permitted the Turk to overrun the Peninsula. We have seen how the Turk had brought a new vigour into the west, and how, avoiding for a time the formidable walls of Constantinople, he crossed the Dardanelles and invaded Europe. The divisions and mutual hostility of the Balkan peoples robbed them of all the advantage of their bravery and of their mountains, and, as they clung to the detested heresy of the Greeks (refusing to admit that the Holy Ghost descended from the Son as well as the Father), Europe left them to their fate. Stupendous battles were fought, and heroic deeds were inscribed in history. Men will still show you natural fastnesses in the mountains where a score of Christians baffled a whole army of Moslem. But racial and religious antagonism prevented a general co-operation, and the Turk slowly advanced.

Bulgaria was annexed before the end of the fourteenth century. Serbia refused to purchase the help of its Christian neighbours by submitting to the Pope, and fell about the middle of the fifteenth century. Moldavia and Wallachia also fell in the fifteenth century. Bosnia was the seat of a very widespread heresy, which the Serbs had persecuted, and these "Bogomils" almost welcomed the new master, and turned Moslem in great numbers. On the bleak mountains of Montenegro alone the Serbs preserved—and have preserved to our time—a remnant of independence. The Albanians long defied the Turks, but even their magnificent positions were in time subdued; and in further time numbers of them purchased prosperous peace on the plains by turning Moslem. The Venetians, who had forced a footing for Italy on the coast, were also vanquished or expelled.

There were now six races—Serbs, Bulgars, Albanians, Greeks, Turks, and Italians (on the coast)—in the Peninsula, accusing each other of perfidy, apostasy, cowardice, and incompetence. Numbers turned Moslem—it is, in fact, remarkable how the majority retained their faith through those four appalling centuries—and sectarian hatred rent the others. Latin Christianity advanced with the Hungarians in the north, and the Sultans starved the independent Slav Churches by putting all the Christians under the wretched patriarchate that survived at Constantinople. Greek priests and Greek

merchants (who bought high office at Constantinople) behaved badly, and created an ineradicable animosity in the land. Large numbers of Serbs migrated to the Austrian and Hungarian provinces, and year by year the Turkish officers led away the flower of the Slav and Albanian children for service in the Moslem corps of the Janissaries. Meantime Turkish pashas and Greek adventurers and Albanian chiefs played the lord, and imposed a crushing burden of taxation and exaction. The land sank steadily below the level of civilisation. The Turks would make no roads, which might unite the scattered malcontents, and the gross injustice of their administration compelled the people to adopt primitive methods of asserting their claims or avenging outrage. Brigandage and murder were the inevitable result of the Turk's refusal to institute justice. The people rotted in their valleys, knowing nothing of the great movements beyond the hills and the seas which were lifting up the nations of Europe toward liberty and enlightenment.

This is the second chief point that one must bear in mind in judging the Balkan peoples : the Turk detained them at the level of the Middle Ages while the rest of Europe advanced. The Japanese gardener will, by judicious starving, make an oak or a pine grow in a flower-pot : but it is of the same race as the spreading oak in the meadow or the tall pine on the hill. European travellers in the earlier part of the nineteenth century had not a very

scientific eye for the peoples they visited. There were, they said, inferior races and superior races : east is east and west is west : and so on. They never realised the elasticity of types, or the pressure of environment : they were no more enlightened than the medieval theologian who traced the remarkable psychic features of the Jew to a divine curse, when they were plainly due to Christian misbehaviour. There was a genuine and stupid belief that, since Serbs and Bulgars and Albanians and Wallachs had had as long a time as themselves to grow up, and had not done so, they were of the "unprogressive" type. Visitors forgot that their own nations had, owing to a more favourable environment, outgrown just such a phase of human development. The English traveller in the Balkans in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century was, of course, a wealthy Londoner or fine provincial gentleman. He knew little of the condition of his own poor, in town or country. If he had known more, he would have known that, except in the matter of taking life, the Balkan peasantry were as good at that time as the English peasantry or poorer town-folk ; and the utter lack of a system of justice might have explained to him the belt or sash full of weapons and the frequent brigandage.

This attitude was further complicated by the change that was occurring in European political views. Just at the time when science began to save lives, when populations began to grow rapidly and

press against the national frontiers, the moral advance of Europe began to discredit aggressive war. Such advances are always accompanied by a good deal of casuistry. It was no longer proper to annex the territory of a small or backward people for your *own* advantage, but it would be justifiable sometimes in *their* interest. So Austria and Russia began to entertain paternal feelings toward these unhappy subjects of the Sultan. The Russian tradition began as a frankly aggressive and half-barbaric design of Peter the Great to enlarge his Empire : it was very little modified in the brain of Catherine : but it became a quite religious and philanthropic ideal in the mind of Alexander I. Austria, as I said, thought little about the Balkans until Prussia slammed the northern gate against her and bade her keep out of Germany. Then she became concerned about these fellow-Christians who groaned under the Sultan's tyranny. England desired no acre of ground in the Balkans, but, until the end of the nineteenth century, she assuredly acted only in her own interest. Lastly came Germany.

Both the Sultans and the Balkan peoples knew, accurately enough, how much philanthropy there was in this nineteenth-century movement, but Serbs and Bulgars and Rumans felt that they were at least as helpless as children and must welcome paternal assistance. They claim, however, that they need help only to rise to their own feet, and that, when the Turkish burden is removed from them,

they will develop small civilisations akin to those of Switzerland, Belgium, and Holland. The present problem of the Balkans is that many fear that Serb and Bulgar and Albanian and Ruman are not capable of doing so, and that, under cover of this fear, and taking advantage of disorders that are still bound to arise, other Powers may aspire to replace the Turk in governing them. Austria most certainly had that design, but we may trust that Austria and Hungary will now lose the southern Slav provinces they have so ill-governed and will never again look southward. Italy very plainly has a disturbing ambition to extend her rule to the other side of the Adriatic. The aim and conduct of Russia are still obscure : I mean that, though she has assuredly played a subtly aggressive part until now, her future is unsettled and may be better. In face of this situation it is well to appreciate very carefully the character of the Balkan peoples.

Austria had taken Slavonia (with its Serbs and Croats) and Transylvania (with its Rumans) from Turkey in the seventeenth century, and Dalmatia (with its Slavs and Italians) in the eighteenth. Before the end of the eighteenth century Russia began to intervene on behalf of Moldavia and Wallachia, and echoes of the great European revolt reached the Balkan valleys. The Serbs were the first to entertain national aspirations, and, under the lead of a powerful and truculent pig-breeder, Kara George, they entered into a long and promis-

ing struggle against the Turks. Meantime, however, Napoleon, who had encouraged Russia to wrest Moldavia and Wallachia from the Turks, had quarrelled with Russia, and the Tsar, in order to meet the French, signed peace with the Turks (1812). The Turks instituted a more vigorous action against the Serbs, and Kara George fled to Austria. In the following year (1814) a certain Milosh Obrenovich contrived to obtain from the Turks the control of his fellow-Serbs, and, when Kara George returned, there was set up the disastrous feud of the Karageorgeviches and the Obrenoviches which has darkened Serbia with tragedy in our own time and done more than anything else to check the admiration of other nations. The Serbs rebelled again under their new leader in 1815, and in 1817 they secured the autonomy of Serbia under the Sultan's suzerainty.

The Albanians and the Greeks were the next to move. The Albanian Revolution, under the Moslem Ali Pasha, was ruined by the ambition and tyranny of its leader, and the Albanians returned to their condition of fierce and lawless defiance on their mountains. Greece was more fortunate, and it is well to notice that the other Balkan peoples resent the favouritism of Europe in this respect. Few Europeans were aware that the Serbs and Bulgars had ever been civilised, but the literature of ancient Greece held a position of unique honour throughout the world, and there was a wide disposition to

regard the rebellion as the saving of a great people from the barbaric thraldom of the Turk. The Serb and Bulgar and Albanian have not so high an opinion of the modern Greek, and they feel that Europe is unjust in putting them on a lower level than him. With the Greek, however, I am not concerned in this work. The independence of Greece was won in 1829, but the momentary friendship of Greek and Albanian has been changed into hatred. Greece covets too much of the fairer land east of the mountains on which the Albanian would base the prosperity of his own State. In the war of 1897 the Albanians gave ready and effective assistance to the Turks against the Greeks.

Serbia made very fair and promising progress under Obrenovich, but the standing feud of the two parties was deepened by the intrigues of Austria and Russia, and the faults and defects of the prince were fiercely discussed. Russia supported Obrenovich, while Austria promoted the cause of Alexander, the son of Kara George ; and in 1842 a revolution put the Karageorgeovich in power. Austrian influence now succeeded Russian, and the events of 1849, when Serbs and Croats assisted the hard-pressed Austrians against the Magyars, drew the two nations even nearer together. Serbia did not as yet suspect the profound ingratitude and selfish designs of the Austrian, but the menacing attitude of Austria during the Crimean War created some alarm. This feeling and the constant opposition of

Alexander to certain popular ministers brought about a second revolution, and the Obrenoviches returned to power.

By the middle of the century Serbia had made considerable progress in culture and organisation, and its people endeavoured to promote friendly relations with their Balkan neighbours as well as to develop their own nationality. A close and cordial correspondence was maintained with Montenegro, Bulgaria, Rumania, and Greece ; and in 1867, when the Greeks had stirred up an insurrection in Crete, the Serbians successfully demanded the withdrawal of the Turkish troops which still occupied their fortresses. Unhappily, the feud of the leading families continued, and in 1868 Michael Obrenovich III was assassinated. The Kara George family was banished, and the country continued to make steady progress. In 1875 occurred the revolt in Bosnia and Herzegovina, to which I have previously referred, and Serbia and Montenegro joined and summoned the Peninsula to cast off the yoke of the Turk. Greece and Rumania, and, for the most part, Bulgaria refused to co-operate—a failure which added one more to the sombre memories of their neighbours—and the Turk blundered into the atrocities of 1875. Serbia was saved by the intervention of Russia, but, as is now well known, Austria demanded the control of Bosnia and Herzegovina as the price of her neutrality, and, although Serbia received her independence at the Berlin Congress,

she saw the shadow of the Austrian coming nearer and nearer to Belgrade.

There can be no doubt that the advance of Austria has gravely disturbed the cultural development of Serbia, and unhappily there were other serious complications of its growth. The revival of the old Serb traditions naturally rekindled the old democratic spirit, and the Radical sentiments which were now spreading in Europe found a wide and ready acceptance. Milan Obrenovich, a luxurious and licentious ruler, who became the first King of Serbia in 1882, was opposed to these sentiments ; and the unpopularity of his opinions, the scandal of his private life, his harsh treatment of Queen Nathalie, and his suspicious friendship with Austria, caused an acute revival of the dynastic quarrel. For the protection of Austria against his rivals, he gave that Empire advantages which seemed to foreshadow an ultimate acceptance of Austrian suzerainty, and in 1885 he allowed himself to be impelled by Austria and Germany into a disastrous campaign against the Bulgars. The dread of the Turk was succeeded by the dread of Austria, and this and the passionate struggles of their internal political life had an evil influence on the development of the Serbs. The country continued to advance, but its idealism was marred and its energy distracted by these unfortunate struggles.

I have previously referred to Mr. Harry de Windt's insistence that the Balkan Peninsula is

“Savage Europe,” yet one finds little to justify his title as far as his experience of Serbia is concerned. Belgrade he discovered to be a handsome modern city with an attractive and pleasure-loving population. He had seen it thirty years before, and the progress it had made in three decades was astonishing. All the educated people spoke French—most of the wealthier, in fact, complete their education at Paris—and there was something of the vivacity, gaiety, and courtesy of the Parisians about the city. More than one visitor spontaneously recalls Paris on visiting the Serbian capital: an impression that is not obliterated when one explores the freedom of its cafés and music-halls. Of distinctive features the most remarkable is, perhaps, the general absence of snobbery and conventionality. Even well-to-do women are not reluctant to continue to share the domestic duties, and there is among the ordinary Serbs a simple fellowship which carries the old democratic spirit of the Slav into modern relations. Belgrade, and Serbia generally, have no aristocracy, no wealthy middle class—and no paupers. It is unhappy only in the incessant rain of political chatter which diverts the far from abounding energy of its citizens from solid plans of organisation to the more formal moves of the political game and the chanting of ancient glories.

A young country cannot entirely be judged by its metropolis, on which its new resources are apt to be disproportionately squandered, but it is the

common feeling of travellers that in the half century of liberty the Serbs have vindicated their character. The impressions of hasty travellers are apt to be conflicting, and it is remarkable to hear so experienced and unbiassed a traveller as Mr. de Windt observe—in the very book which he entitles *Through Savage Europe*—that the Serbs are “the most polite people in the world.” Politeness is, perhaps, not the happiest term for the easy-going and instinctive fellowship with which they greet either the countryman or the stranger. The Serb has the simplicity and candour of the well-developed child. Miss Durham, whose warm sympathy yet entirely objective manner of describing facts and persons give her books an exceptional value, received offers of marriage which were made to her with a simple candour that would have outraged a conventional person. This simplicity is, no doubt, in part due to the comparative ignorance of the people and their freshness to the larger life of the world, but it has roots in a certain benevolence and geniality of character which education will not destroy.

The bane of Serbia is politics, or the kind of politics which his history and circumstances have imposed on the Serb. He has a beautiful and fertile country. Four-fifths of Serbia consists of hills and mountains, but they are rarely high and barren, and the soil is, for the most part, extremely rich. The elementary agriculture which still generally prevails does not wrest from the soil one-tenth—some autho-

rities say not one-hundredth—part of its possible produce ; and the progress that has been made in recent years proves that both wheat and the vine may be richly cultivated. An application of the energy and resources of the little State to its economic development for a single generation would give it an amazing prosperity, if the jealousy of its neighbours will grant it the strip of coast which it urgently needs and which could so easily be spared. The Serb is not lazy and unintelligent, as some writers have represented. Vigour is assuredly not one of his characteristics, and it is generally agreed that he does not equal the Greek or the Ruman in quickness of wit. He likes leisure and festivities—likes to see his womenfolk industrious while he discusses the latest phase of his absorbing politics. These features, however, must be connected with his history. Four centuries of corrupt repressive government, when to accumulate wealth was to invite official covetousness, do not promote energy. Already one finds schools lit by electric light in remote districts of the country, and the establishment of an orderly and just administration has moderated the earlier violence. When the Serb can be induced to think less about his early dominion, when the soil of the Balkans is decisively and justly delimited, when older Powers no longer cast their threatening shadows over the land, he will discover that the material bases of European prosperity are good roads and good drains, steam and electricity, edu-

cation and medical science. His problem, like the problem of Ireland, is neither moral nor political. It is economic.

It is hardly necessary to say that the leading Serbs appreciate this, but until our own time a lamentable fate has kept them occupied with problems of politics and the wasteful hazards of war. Milan's son and successor, the young Alexander, proved an obstinate and tactless monarch. He began his royal career by a violation of the Constitution—by prematurely declaring himself of age in 1893—and one cannot regard it as a mere accident or coincidence that during the ten years of his reign he perpetrated four of these *coups d'état* and had no less than twenty-four ministries. One does not care to dwell harshly on the acts of that unfortunate monarch, but justice to his people requires that these things should be recalled. The Radicals, who had a prospect of securing and keeping power in so democratic a country, were treated by him unjustly and unconstitutionally. Yet in face of this grave and general dissatisfaction the young King contracted a passion for one of his mother's ladies-in-waiting, Drága Mashin, and the scandal was converted into indignation when, in 1900, slighting the earnest entreaties of his parents and friends, he married Draga and put her on the throne of Serbia. Draga was as injudicious, or as contemptuous of the growing discontent, as Alexander. Her brothers were encouraged to issue

from obscurity and share her good fortune, and it was bitterly complained that she interfered unduly in the affairs of the kingdom.

There were uglier rumours, and, although we need not consider them, they, in point of fact, inflamed the growing resentment, and a revolution became certain. The assassination of Draga and Alexander was brutal, and for many years it confirmed the general European feeling to the prejudice of the Serbs. We must remember that the murders were committed by a few, who seem to have been intoxicated before they were led to the attack, but we must acknowledge that such things could happen only among a backward people. Ferocity is neither innate in the Slav nor characteristic of the Serbian people. We can do no more than recall the long centuries of demoralising misrule and the unhappy feud which had afterwards retarded the recovery of the Serbian people's character. Since that assassination, in 1903, they have earned our esteem both on the field of battle and in the more arduous achievements of peace. Mr. de Windt, who wrote harshly of Serbia and its present ruler, Peter I (a grandson of Kara George), predicted (in 1906) that another sanguinary revolution would presently compel Europe to take Serbia under its tutelage. His estimate and prophecy have proved singularly wrong.

But this ghastly settlement of one political problem—the feud of two dynasties—unhappily left a

dozen others to distract or absorb the nation's energy. To a large extent the problems of the Balkans are due to a kind of nationalism, the determination to recover ancient frontiers, which a more mature generation may be trusted to outgrow. The melancholy chant of former glories has served its purpose in reawakening the feeling of nationality, and it might now give place to a reasonable recognition that no conceivable distribution of the soil of the Peninsula can satisfy the historic pretensions of each race, and that an insistence on these ambitions portends a long and dreary era of struggle. Yet the position of Serbia was particularly unhappy. Its population of less than three millions could not be insensible to the fact that a further two million Serbs (or Serbs and Croats) lay, beyond its northern frontier, under the alien authority of Austria and Hungary, and that in Old Servia and Macedonia a further very large number of Serbs still groaned under the burden of Turkish misrule. The quarter million Serbs of Montenegro will doubtless maintain the independence they have so long defended on their rugged mountains, and they are on the best of terms with their brother Serbs. But it was quite inevitable that the Serbs should take a peculiar interest in the millions of their race who desired to be united with them, and a new political fever diverted them from the problem of their internal development.

I have already recognised the material benefits

which Austria-Hungary procured for Bosnia and Herzegovina since they were entrusted to her charge. Serajevo ceased to be one of the most lawless and insanitary cities of that unfortunate part of Europe, and railways, schools, and drains were introduced gradually over the provinces. But these improvements were to be the reward of a sacrifice of their Slav nationality by the Serbs and Croats. We saw that Francis Joseph complained that the provinces were not annexed outright in 1878, and that the annexation in 1908 was a wholly unwarranted act, prompted by the ambition of the Emperor and the general belief in Russia's weakness. The Serbs and Croats resisted by force of arms, and, when they had to yield to the superior regiments of the Austrian army, they maintained a sullen and fierce resistance by the formation of patriotic societies. The Serbs knew, as all the world knows to-day, that the next victim of Austria's resolve to spread over the Balkans would be Serbia, and it would be ingenuous either to suppose that they did not encourage their kinsmen in Bosnia and Herzegovina or to blame them for doing so. A union of the southern Slavs would alone enable them to defend their nationality against their hostile neighbours, and the patriotic societies which sought to attain that object were generously patronised at Belgrade.

Unhappily, this fresh political agitation, natural as it was, tended to divert Serb energy from con-

structive tasks and was, like the preceding agitation, marred by an assassination. Austria endeavoured to persuade Europe that the agitation, and the assassination to which it led, were directed officially in Belgrade, but we have seen grave reason to distrust Austrian legal procedure when a political interest is at stake. The murder of the Archduke, a liberal prince, at Serajevo, so obviously entailed grave consequences for Serbia that we may unhesitatingly ascribe it to isolated fanatics. The "inquiry" which Austria secretly conducted has not the least judicial value, and the acceptance by Serbia of almost the whole of the ruthless terms imposed on her by Austria cannot but command our admiration. There is here no question of involving the Serbian people in a murder. I follow the historical development only for the purpose of showing how the energy of Serbia continued to be dissipated and its internal constructive program retarded.

In the meantime the equally distracting concern of the Serbs about their kinsmen in the west and south, and the zeal to recover from the Turk at least the territory which represented the heart of their old kingdom, had led to the Balkan War of 1912 and 1913. No doubt the further weakening of the Turks in the war with Italy had encouraged the Balkan peoples. In any case, they continued to witness outrages against their kinsmen in Turkish territory, and they were convinced from long experience that the Powers of Europe could not sup-

press these outrages or would exert their forces only in their own ultimate interest. The Balkan statesmen thereupon adjusted their apparently irreconcilable claims, and, in a short and heroic struggle, swept the Turk out of the Peninsula. Unhappily, Austria and Italy refused to allow them to divide the acquired territory as they had agreed to do. Serbia was harshly denied a port on the Adriatic—one of her most pressing and most real needs—and Albania was set up as an independent principality. Serbia now claimed compensation for the territory which the jealous greater Powers would not allow her to occupy, and Bulgaria refused to grant it. In June, 1913, the fierce passions issued in fratricidal war. Serbs and Greeks, aided by Rumania, attacked the Bulgarians, and the development of Balkania was further retarded. Once more a vast number of the more vigorous inhabitants were sacrificed on the field of battle, while the final settlement left the four races more inflamed than ever against each other. In whatever way you divide the Balkan territory, there will be members of one race under the rule of its rivals, and the confused and bitter memory of historic differences and religious hostilities will be inflamed.

The last phase of Serbia's luckless history should ensure for her the sympathetic interest of the civilised world. Crushed and stunted by four centuries of oppression, she had nevertheless found the energy to shake off the yoke of the Turks and enter

upon a promising development. But stern and inevitable problems of internal and external politics diverted her energy from her proper task of creating a civilisation, and they involved her in a fresh and most exhausting war. Hardly had she recovered from the strain and turned her eyes to the development of the fifteen thousand square miles of territory she secured by the Balkan War—hardly had she ended her rejoicings over the restoration of her ancient towns and the accession to her nationality of a further million and a half of her race—when a murder committed in Bosnia brought the menace of Austria upon her in more brutal and terrible form than ever. In the opinion of the civilised world Serbia made heroic sacrifices for peace, and was entirely justified in seeing in the last and supreme demand of Austria the beginning of a surrender of her new nationality. Under the tutelage of Russia, which now at least played an unselfish and generous part, she refused to surrender the fruit of all her efforts and sacrifices, and put her weakened forces in the field. They have won the admiration of the world ; and the horrid stretch of desolated homes and mutilated women and children, where the Magyar passed, the fearful confusion of her economic life, and the ghastly ravages of disease and famine in her midst, will surely draw upon her the encouraging and wholly unselfish interest of the world when the clouds of war have rolled away. She has merited her strip of the Adriatic coast and the

return to her bosom of Bosnia, Herzegovina, Slavonia, Croatia, and part of Dalmatia. And there is nothing in the character and recent life of Serbia which leads us to doubt that this reunited nation of seven million southern Slavs will resume its upward development at the point at which the Turk arrested it, and, realising at length the bloody and disastrous consequences of religious and racial animosity, will fling its windows wide open to every current of European civilisation and enjoy the peace and happiness its men and women have deserved.

Montenegro may or may not merge in the new Serbian kingdom. Probably not, as centuries of separate political existence have given her the consciousness of distinct nationality. Her small population (286,000) was nearly doubled by her share in the spoils of the Balkan War, and she obtained some thirty miles of sea-board : a niggardly concession which may be enlarged at the expense of Austria. The Montenegrin has a fine character marred by isolation and constant combat. He has a quick sense of honour, a rigorous honesty, a notable spirit of generosity and hospitality. But his code is, as his history would lead us to expect, narrow and obsolete. The clocks on the barren hills of Montenegro would hardly be expected to keep time with those of France and England. The Montenegrin is apt to think that the work of peace is women's work : a man's business is to fight. There

are said to be no lawyers in Montenegro, but one cannot acknowledge that a belt of silver-plated pistols is a commendable substitute for a lawyer. The capital, Cettinje, is itself a city of not more than four thousand souls, and the scattering of the small population over a large and difficult territory will long impede the cultural development of the land. Montenegro has, however, the advantage of general agreement in religion (the Greek Orthodox faith), and a successful advance in Serbia would undoubtedly induce it to reconsider its primitive habits and devote its characteristic sense of honour to a great national ideal.

The Albanians are described by some of their most sympathetic visitors as "a primeval lot of raw human beings," and one wonders at times whether the only progress they have made since the days when they retreated to the mountains before the Slavs is to have substituted the rifle and revolver for more primitive weapons. They have been the last brigands of Europe, and are still obstinately disposed to respect and assert the right of the weapon. Yet it is hardly necessary to protest that the idea of attributing this truculence to racial features, of conceiving the Albanian as a stubborn and intractable survivor of the prehistoric Illyrian, is wholly unsound. Was human life less cheap in certain parts of Spain or Italy or America less than a century ago? The Albanian is intelligent and has his virtues. He has grown up in a world where for

ages no law secured or protected his rights, and he has perforce looked to his weapons. Turkey found his unrestrained nature a useful agency for suppressing his Christian neighbours and did not desire, even if it had been able, to teach him discipline. He knows only the crude and simple code of social or tribal life which his chiefs have enforced on the mountains, and he cherishes bitter grievances against the neighbour races. He, too, has a memory of a great leader, Scander Beg, who once broadened the confines of the country, and his "politics" consists in recovering as much as he can of the good lands of the plains from Greek or Serb.

But the careful and unbiassed observer will refrain from bringing the two million Albanians under a common description, and will notice how even their character, rugged and hard as the mountains *in* the mountains, assumes more genial features in a more favourable environment. Even on the hills a refined nature appears at times and pleads, perhaps with priestly influence, for the abandonment of the old blood-feuds and the primitive tribal ways. You cannot in a generation undo the influence of a selective agency which has been at work for five centuries or more ; and the conditions of life on those Albanian mountains have been for ages of such a nature that the fittest to survive were the stalwart and picturesque ruffians whom the travel-writer has made familiar. Already in the cities of the coast and of the eastern plains one

observes a natural softening of the Albanian character. There was, indeed, always a marked difference between the Albanians of different districts, especially between those of the law-protected towns and plains and those of the law-defying fastnesses in the hills. In the coast-towns, where Italian and Austrian priests or brothers have (in the interest of their respective nationalities) established schools and secured an influence, the Albanian departs further and further in type from his lawless cousin of the mountain villages.

The Albanian is under-estimated because he has never formed a civilisation—never had the stimulus or opportunity : the Greek is over-estimated precisely because of the brilliant ancient civilisation which makes his name familiar throughout the world. We are not consistent even in our errors. The Egyptian, whose civilisation was sustained for a period at least ten times as lengthy as that of Greece, we regard as outworn and incapable of resurrection : the Greek we are apt to conceive still as having Athenian blood in his veins. Assuredly the Greeks are the most intelligent and enterprising of the peoples of eastern Europe, but we must remember that their situation has been as favourable as that of Albania or Serbia was unfavourable. There are probably few now who find the secret of the genius of ancient Hellas in its glorious climate and in the free blue waters that wash its extensive coast ; yet these important

advantages were at hand when the modern Greek recovered his national sentiment and ambition. To the disgrace of Europe, Serbia has still no outlet on the sea, while Greece has, for her size, one of the largest coast-lines in the world, just at the gate between east and west : nor should we overlook the immense moral advantage which Greece has had in the peculiar interest and sympathy of the civilised world, and in the absence of rivals from three of her frontiers.

One may recall these advantages without detracting from the intelligence and industry of the Greek. By superior ability he has won a commanding position in the economic world of Turkey, and to-day he forms half the population of Smyrna and one-fifth that of Constantinople. Recent utterances of M. Denizelos have made it plain that Greece even hopes to acquire a large area of Asia Minor itself. Yet in contrasting the success and the aims of Greece with those of the other Balkan peoples, we sometimes err in granting her a conspicuous moral superiority. The Greek trader has not a repute for honesty in the east, and we know that in the interior and northern part of the country the Greeks degenerated, under the Turks, hardly less than the Slavs. In some measure, indeed, the modern Greek has been perverted by the world-wide homage paid to his name, and has gravely prejudiced the settlement of Balkania by the extravagance of his claims.

To a person of superficial education "Macedonia" is apt to appear a natural and historic part of Greece, and in the appalling ferment of ambitions which has retarded the civilisation of the Balkans the intrigues of the Greeks to secure Macedonia have been conspicuous. According to Greek estimates there were in Macedonia 700,000 Moslems, 700,000 Greeks, and 400,000 Bulgars ; and therefore, if the Turk was to be dispossessed, the Greek was his natural successor. But, so uncertain are statistics and so transient is nationality itself in that chaotic province, that the Bulgars claimed that *they* numbered 700,000, and the Greeks only 30,000 ; and the Serbs again had an entirely different estimate. The best estimate seems to be that the vague and artificially constructed region known as Macedonia contained about a million Slavs and about half a million or more Greeks and Turks. But it is a land where one's nationality may be bought or sold for a mess of pottage, and where priests and politicians have been busy for decades with such transactions. However, as the issue of the Balkan War, Macedonia has disappeared and the region is divided between Greece, Serbia, and Bulgaria ; and the lion's share fell to Greece. It is to be regretted that this has not sated her land-hunger, and that her politics is still apt to be a larger application of her commercial adroitness instead of a constructive program.

The Bulgars are, we saw, a Slavonised race of

Asiatic origin. We find them first scattered along the banks of the Volga, a Ugrian race akin to the Finns and Magyars, and from that region the Mongols drove them to Balkania. They still retain conspicuous physical features of the Asiatic, but centuries of mingling with the Slav and of common suffering with the Slav have evolved a character not greatly differing from that of their neighbours. There are travellers who regard the Bulgars as the most interesting and attractive people of the Peninsula, and it will be generally admitted that the Bulgar is more industrious than the Serb and has made more progress in constructing a system of modern education. The greater attractiveness is, however, largely due to the greater variety of the population. There are half a million Turks, a hundred thousand Gipsies, and large numbers of Rumans, Greeks, and Jews scattered amongst the three million Bulgars. In point of character the Bulgar is not superior to his neighbours, and has suffered no less than they from the demoralising experience of centuries of Turkish misrule. The overwhelming mass of the people, who are tied to the soil, remain, like the body of the Serbs, at the medieval stage of culture ; they are hospitable, and generally honest and peaceful, but grossly superstitious and primitive in their habits. The more intelligent minority, whom we expect to free their fellows from their slavery to ignorant Popes and crude medieval traditions, devote too much attention to the Balkan

game of politics and too little to internal development. Ugly passions are consecrated in the service of what are thought to be religious and national ideals, and the clergy, who form an autonomous branch of the Greek Orthodox faith, have united their ambition with that of the politicians and condoned much outrage and sordid intrigue.

The defects of the Bulgars are, in fact, the lingering results of their history rather than an expression of racial character. The progress that Sofia has made in half a century shows how ready and competent the people are to adopt western ideas, but until two years ago the work of internal reorganisation was hampered by the familiar eagerness to secure a due share of the inheritance of the Turk. In that eagerness the whole intense political life of the nation was absorbed, and we can hardly expect to see a more rapid internal development until the last hope of expansion is extinguished. Every few years since the securing of independence the Bulgars have been involved in some war with their neighbours in regard to territory, and the present war has further postponed the development of the Balkan States by inflaming once more the ambition to extend their frontiers. There is no ground to doubt that, when the map of Europe is settled, the Bulgars will prove as competent as any to check the last spurts of lawlessness by a rigorous system of law and to develop the large resources of their country. It is, perhaps, not without significance

that the country already enjoys manhood suffrage, and that there are twenty-one Socialists among the 250 members of the Sobranje.

The Rumans, the last of what are generally known as the Balkan peoples, I have discussed in an earlier chapter. The ethnographer smiles at their contention that they are the descendants of the ancient Roman settlers in Dacia, and identifies them as a very thoroughly Slavonised Turki people. It is estimated that there are only five and a half million Rumans in the total population of Rumania (seven and a half millions), but there are a further three millions in Transylvania and there are several millions in other provinces. A reunion of the scattered race would provide a foundation of a powerful and promising nation. The Rumans are intelligent and of late years have made considerable progress. Bucharest is already a fine city of 340,000 people, with hotels and shops that challenge comparison with those of any other small European metropolis. Like Belgrade, it aspires to be known as the Paris of eastern Europe, and it has a vivacity, a freedom, even a licence, which give a superficial ground for the comparison. Experienced travellers speak of it as "the most immoral city in the world," and it is certainly conspicuous for that resolute gaiety and liberty of personal conduct which one associates with the Latin peoples. Its character has, in fact, been influenced as deeply by Paris as by Petrograd, and one hears more French than Russian

spoken among its polite society. It has two universities, and it is so far from the grossness and the slavery to tradition which one expects in the east that the Rumans resent the practice of describing them as one of the Balkan peoples.

The significance of Rumania from my point of view is considerable. No doubt some of the old Roman-Dacian blood does linger in the veins of the Rumans. Their very language remains to this day a degenerate form of Latin. But there is no doubt whatever that Slav and Turki blood are the chief race-ingredients of the modern Ruman, and that he has passed through just such a period of deforming and brutalising misgovernment as the Serbs and the Bulgars. Yet he has responded to the call of civilisation, and embraced his opportunity with a promptness that gives us hope of the future of the Balkan peoples. The mass of the Rumans are still necessarily backward, but a liberal constitution and a wise modification of the land laws have done much to elevate them. When the resources of the country are fully developed—when the vast corn-fields are more wisely cultivated, and the oil-fields fully exploited—Rumania will redeem the character of south-eastern Europe. It has, of course, been greatly aided by Russia, and we may trust that Russia will be content to witness sympathetically the independent prosperity of its *protégé*.

It is at this juncture the Serbs who particularly interest us among the Balkan peoples, but it seemed

useful to indicate how the principles which we apply to the interpretation of Serbian character illumine also the character of her neighbours. The last tendency to regard the Balkan peoples as unprogressive, or likely to remain a refractory element in the civilisation of Europe, should be expelled when we reflect that their less attractive features are merely those of the Middle Ages. What we have outgrown, they may outgrow ; and the very rapid advance of Sofia, Belgrade, and Bucharest justify a hope that they will outgrow those features rapidly. Why they have retained them so long is no mystery to the historian. The man who thinks that the brigandage of modern Albania is a proof of inferior racial character may be invited to study the extent and the nature of brigandage in the Papal States themselves so late as the early part of the nineteenth century. There was a time within living memory when similar conditions—in the west of the United States—reduced members of what are regarded as the superior races to a similar condition of lawlessness and truculence.

Unhappily, the removal of the Turk, who had detained these peoples at the medieval stage of development, could only be effected by creating a national consciousness which at once raised fresh and grave problems. The Balkanian was fired to revolt by putting before him a vision of some large kingdom which his fathers had once controlled, and, as the medieval kingdoms of the various races had

overlapped, the dream of restoration led to a lamentable rivalry and confusion. The map of the Balkans is not yet satisfactorily drawn, but a moderate allowance of Adriatic frontage to Montenegro and Serbia would probably suffice ; and there is coast enough for all. For the rest, a generous interchange of subjects—restoring Serbs to Serbia, Bulgars to Bulgaria, and so on—would remove much of the incentive to that baneful kind of political activity which has so long retarded the advance of the Balkans. When the territory of each is fixed by the authority of Europe, when there is no longer a menace to their liberty from Austria or Russia, the Balkanians will transfer their zeal to constructive problems of internal policy. We shall then see the children of Europe quickly ripen into manhood. The millions who have so long been detained in gross ignorance may well be expected to resist at first the drastic interference with their habits and traditions. But the credentials of civilisation are too impressive to be ignored, and a new selective agency—a system of law and order and democracy that will favour the peaceful and the refined—will remove the last traces of the deformation which resulted from centuries of oppression and misgovernment.

CHAPTER V

THE SLAV IN RUSSIA

Russia the destiny of Europe—not Pan-Slavism—The vast number and growing organisation of the Russian Slavs—Early spread and character of the Slavs—The rule of the Norsemen—The effects of the domination of the Mongol—The Muscovite Empire founded—Peter and his corrupt successors—The Tsars of the nineteenth century—The Slav awakes and attacks despotism—Character-study of a typical Russian village—Isolation, climate, and vast distances—Russians not fatalistic and unprogressive—Absurdity of the Russophile theory—The fierce struggle for light and life—Character of Nicholas II—The Revolutionary, the Finn, the Pole, and the Jew—Hope of a new era.

THE chief interest of Europe during that phase of recent development which is closing in tragedy was the moral evolution of Germany ; during the next phase the issue of peace or war will be decided by the moral evolution of Russia. When Napoleon meditated the foundation by conquest of what was to be in effect a world-empire, he looked with some concern to the vast plains, with their uncounted millions of vigorous peasants, which lay in some obscurity beyond the frontiers of Germany and Austria. Would it not be well to share the sovereignty of the earth with the master of those millions of serfs ? Whatever Napoleon's fortune might have been if he had persisted in his friendship with the Tsar, he abandoned the design, and he left the flower of his armies on the road to Moscow. His-

tory repeats even its blunders. In our day a smaller imperialist adventurer, William II, has dreamed the same dream, and made the same mistake ; and he in turn has left the flower of his army on the frozen soil of Russia, and will, from his St. Helena, see the great frame of Russia grow larger and more powerful than ever.

There are American as well as German writers who have complacently argued that the dominating races of the twentieth century will be the North American and the German. It is very singular that any observer of our time should fail to see the significance of Russia. There are in the United States seventy million people, very imperfectly fused into a nationality, confined within a territory that will be over-populated in another generation, and cannot be enlarged, and not likely to become a great military power. There will be in Germany at the close of the war, if the Poles and Alsace-Lorraine are detached, about sixty million people ; and for years they will be vigilantly restrained by the civilised world from renewing their lamentable design of dominating Europe. But in the Russian Empire there are actually nearly a hundred million Slavs, besides fifteen million docile Asiatics. Their fertility is prodigious, and, if the appalling death-rate is attacked on modern lines, the population will be doubled in little more than a generation. If the resources of the Empire are scientifically developed, if its net of railways is completed, if the administration

is reformed and education fearlessly granted, this Russian people, already occupying nearly a sixth of the entire land-surface of the earth, and more than a sixth of its good soil, will be incomparably the most powerful white nation in the world. A thoroughly awakened and organised China alone would be competent to challenge its decisions. It is to Russia—to the aim, the mood, the character of Russia—that the other peoples of Europe, and even of Asia, must henceforward look for the clue to their destiny.

Some writers have spoken of Pan-Slavism as a menace of the future. They seem to have overlooked the enormous disproportion between the Slavs of Russia and the Slavs or Turko-Slavs of the Balkan Peninsula. Russia is too large to be eager for the accession of these few millions to its population ; and they are too definitely crystallised as separate nationalities to allow Russia to absorb them. Pan-Slavism was a political pretext which served its purpose, and may be discarded. It put a modern ethical dress on the Russian ambition to incorporate those provinces of the Turk which separated Russia from the warm southern ocean. It may or may not be a matter of disappointment to Russia that it has created half-a-dozen stubborn little nationalities in the place of the decaying Turk, but at least they ought to prove benevolently disposed neighbours. And since we may expect in the immediate future, either that Russia will occupy

the last fragment of Turkey in Europe or that—as seems more politic—the fortifications of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles will be razed for ever, and the outlet to the Mediterranean will be entirely free, Russia may contemplate without envy the independent development of the Balkan peoples.

In any case, the element of uncertainty on this side reminds us once more how much depends on the character of Russia. From the first foundation of civilisation more northern peoples, or races from higher altitudes, have pressed upon more southern peoples. Since civilisation reached Europe the more northern races have constantly and naturally fought their way toward warmer lands and warmer seas. Will this mightiest Empire the north has ever produced continue to press toward the Mediterranean, the Persian Gulf, the Indian Ocean, and the China Sea? If it does, who, when its resources are fully developed, will restrain it? Humanitarians are asking all over the world if this is to be the last great war in history, and the answer which most of us whisper to each other is: That depends on Russia.

Hence the task of interpreting the soul of Russia must be approached with more than ordinary care, yet with a resolution to be entirely candid. Already there is in most countries a heated and perplexing discussion of the character of Russia. "The barbaric Slav" is a familiar phrase which has reconciled many to the aggression and the outrages committed by Germany. Is there some oriental strain

in the Russian people that makes the masses blindly submissive to autocracy, and makes the autocracy wanton in the exercise of its unchallenged power? What of the Finns, the Poles, the Jews, the Persians, the Russian radicals, who display their scars and denounce the tyrant from Paris to San Francisco? What of the overcrowded and pestilent jails, the red splashes on the streets of Petrograd and Moscow, the shivering penal colonies of Siberia? But, on the other hand, what of that prompt and marvellous sacrifice by which the Russian Government, in an hour of supreme need, abandoned its huge income from the sale of spirits? What of the incorruptible loyalty with which Russia, who could at any time purchase a lucrative peace, has sustained the far greater part of the burden of war while her unprepared Allies were sheltering from the winter's winds? What of the new spirit that has linked Pole and Finn and Russian and Tatar in an invincible force, and of the new efficiency which has astonished the world? Have we misjudged Russia in the past? Or is some beneficent reform proceeding in the heart of the Empire?

From the point of view of the ethnologist, the Russian people—the Slav population of Russia—is one of the most nearly homogeneous among the larger peoples of the earth, yet the psychological study of Russia is one of the most difficult that can be undertaken. Let me illustrate the difficulty by referring to certain studies of Russian character

which we may examine more closely at a later stage. That experienced traveller and observer, Dr. Dillon, published (pseudonymously) in 1892 a work which he entitled *Russian Characteristics*. In spite of the author's disclaimer we must recognise that there was a political aim, adverse to Russia, in the book, yet the consistent masses of fact embodied in it made up a terrible indictment of the Russian people. Dr. Dillon contended, and supported his contention with abundant evidence, that they were very drunken, very untruthful, very dishonest, very immoral, and very thriftless, shiftless, gross, and un-enterprising. Now the remarkable thing is, as I will show later, that a distinguished Russian professor, of the liberal political school, examining Dr. Dillon's indictment, says : "The general impression he gives is, we must admit, not far from true." This, remember, was a charge against the mass of the Russian people—against, in round numbers, seventy out of ninety million Slavs—and Dr. Dillon ventured to extend his charge in a painful degree against the townsfolk, and even the professional classes. There remain the official class, the nobles, and the statesmen and royal family ; and these are fiercely assailed by scores of writers in every literature, and are in substance no more defensible than the corresponding minority in the Ottoman Empire.

Yet since Dr. Dillon published his book, and described the Russian people as devoid alike of

moral sense and the power of initiative, the country has passed through a development which seems to reveal an entirely different character. The educated class has, at great sacrifice, made a fierce struggle for the triumph of ideals over old abuses : the peasants themselves have become articulate in a very surprising proportion. This struggle had, of course, begun long before 1892, and, as we shall see, there was a splendid effort at improvement taking place all over the country before that date, and a very promising response on the part of the people. All this culminated in the bloody struggle of 1905, and foreigners began to wonder whether there was not one more blunder in the superficial psychology of races which has got into the literature of Europe. But our perplexity is increased when we find Russia returning to comparative tranquillity, and we are assured by authoritative journals and writers that the Russian people never had a genuine sympathy with this effort to win for them Western ideals and institutions : that the Slav really is fundamentally different in type from us and will continue to have a culture of his own.

It is not easy to make one's way with confidence in the study of the Russian people, yet it is possible to disentangle a few truths of great importance from the mass of contradictory estimates and impressions. And the first truth that it is expedient to establish is that there is no such thing as a fixed and unchanging Slav type of character. The re-

mote beginning of the Russian nation in a group of Slav tribes, which at one time lived east of the Carpathians, no more explains the character of the Russian than the little flood that trickles day and night from the Rhone glacier explains the broad stream that pours over southern France. It is quite true that some characteristics of even the primitive Slav will be found in Russia to-day, because the occupation and environment remain the same for millions of people ; but the general character, as we find it, has been modified and shaped by a hundred influences in the intervening centuries. The result would have been substantially the same whatever the primitive race was. The Slav has not made his history : his history has made him. He has no essential characteristics of race which mark him off in a pronounced manner from other peoples. He is neither more sensuous, nor more imaginative, nor more peaceful, nor more melancholic, nor more fatalistic—each of these has been assigned as his characteristic—than others. But he has an entirely different home, and has had an entirely different history, from the other peoples of Europe ; and it is these differences which we find reflected in the virtues and vices of his nature.

The Roman officers who guarded the north-eastern frontier of their Empire, beyond the Danube, regarded as a negligible and undesirable fringe of the earth the more northerly land beyond the Carpathians. Of its extent they had no suspicion,

but its desolate wastes, locked for half a year in the grip of a stern winter, seemed to place it permanently outside the pale of civilisation. To the fierce and backward tribes who occasionally issued from it to harass them they give the general name of "Scythians." We know to-day that peoples of a very different character, both European and Asiatic, roamed over that enormous territory. The Slavs, at the time when we begin to have some vague knowledge of the region, seem to have occupied the district of Galicia and Poland. North of them were the Lithuanians and the Prussians, their nearest kindred among the peoples of Europe; and the remainder of what we now call Russia was occupied by tribes from the east. Finns were broadly scattered over the land, and were being pushed west and north by Scythians (whom many take to be the ancestors of the Slavs), who in turn were displaced by Bulgars and Mongols. The words "Asiatic" and "European" are apt to suggest in our minds a sharp contrast which is wholly unjust. Not only were some of the Asiatic peoples, such as the Persians and Hindus, closely related to the European, but, until our Middle Ages, the nearer Asiatic peoples proved as cultivable as any in Europe. Moreover, between the Mongol peoples of further Asia and the Europeans there were large populations (from which we get our Finns, Magyars, and Turks) which cannot be regarded as inferior merely because they happened, for the most part,

to lie east of the imaginary line which we call the frontier of Europe.

The Slavs, however, belonged to the European family, and I have already explained that, being from an early date tillers of the soil, they had more interest in peace than war, and were more disposed to communal and democratic forms than to militarism and monarchy. They had chiefs, of course, and in their migrations or in defence of their lands could present a brave and powerful front. Nor were they entirely agricultural in occupation : they relied also on hunting and fishing. Yet in the main they were an agricultural people, and in their settled villages a high degree of self-government, and many features of communism, were naturally developed. We have only to reflect that more than eighty per cent. of the Russian people are still tillers of the soil to understand their continuity in this respect. From their original home at the foot of the Carpathians they have travelled age after age over the great plains of Russia, and, scattered along its innumerable rivers, and over its vast spaces, they have wrested their food from the soil, and discussed their little affairs in their village-councils, much as their fathers did two thousand years ago. Of the mighty cultural changes and advances in the rest of Europe they knew nothing. Like the Turks, they were not refractory to the idea of progress, because until recent years the idea was never presented to them.

This appalling monotony and narrowness of life for the overwhelming majority of the people during millennia give us the basic features of the Slav character—or, as some would say, the featurelessness of the Slav character. But these fundamental traits have been modified, and partly perverted, by other influences. The general advance of the Slavs over Russia (and southward over the Danube and the Balkans) took place in the seventh and eighth centuries. We must remember that Russia was already populated, and its population was mixed in blood, by that time. In the third century the Goths bore down from the north upon the Finns and Scythians : in the fifth century the Huns drove the tide westward once more : in the seventh century the Khazars (a mixture of Turki and Scythian) drove the Finns farther to the west and most of the Bulgars (who had a kingdom on the Volga) to the south-west. It was chiefly when these movements had worn themselves out, in the eighth century, that the Slavs poured over western and central Russia. The central stream moved eastward from the region between the Vistula and the Dniester, and these Slavs (probably mingling with the Turki peoples) seem to have given birth to the "Little Russians." Another stream seems to have come from the region of the Elbe, and, mingling with the Finns, produced the "Great Russians." The "White Russians" may come from an intermediate stream, mingling with the Lithuanians. Most cer-

tainly there was a good deal of mixture of races, and the persistence of the physical Slav type is not easily explained. There was also much warfare, and by the ninth century we find the Slavs settled under military leaders over the western half of Russia : a countless multitude of isolated village-communities, with market towns (Novgorod, Rostow, Polozsk, Kief, &c.) at the junctures of the rivers.

“Russia” is not a Slav name. “Rus” is probably the Finn name for “way-farer,” and was given by the Finns to the Norsemen who crossed the country on their way to Constantinople. A large trade, especially in furs, was developing, and the Greek emperors began to employ regiments of the tall powerful Norsemen, as Varangian guards, in their degenerate armies. The men of Rus, or the Norsemen, were better than the Slavs both at trade and at fighting, and in the ninth century we find them taking over the control of the country. Here again it would be an error to speak of racial characteristics : the monotonous agricultural life of the overwhelming mass of the Slavs is a sufficient explanation. From the towns, especially Novgorod and Kief, which were mere timber settlements, the Norse leaders ruled the country, and raised their taxes. Kief, their chief capital, became a large and prosperous city. This change was the second step in the deformation of the Slav. Scattered over an enormous area in isolated villages, absorbed in the unstimulating work of agriculture, the Slavs would

not have made any progress, but at least they had lived on the products of their soil, and their industry, and a certain moral standard was maintained by the responsibilities of communal life. Now they must share both their scanty produce and their liberty with autocrats.

The abandonment of the old nature-religion for Byzantine Christianity at the end of the tenth century would not be claimed by any but a Russian priest to have improved the character of the people. It was the substitution of one set of rites for another, from the peasant's point of view. Indeed, as the earlier religion had had no priests, the change was a disadvantage. The Byzantine priesthood, which founded the Russian, was deeply corrupt, and in league with corrupt rulers ; and, when occasion arose, the same would happen in Russia. The alliance of the clergy with the Muscovite rulers has been one of the gravest curses of the country.

The Russian kingdom under the Normans occupied, roughly, the country west of a line which one might draw from Kief to Archangel. East of that line was a vast region of steppes and forests, over which wild Asiatics wandered, and from this region, in the thirteenth century, the invincible armies of the great Mongol leader, Dchingis Khan, advanced upon the Russians. The rule of the Norsemen had ended in division and confusion, and just in that period of anarchy Dchingis Khan had founded his empire, and was extending it from the walls of

China to Russia. In 1224 he defeated the Russians, and, after a temporary withdrawal, overran the country. A new and more exacting autocracy was now imposed on the Slavs, and their character further deteriorated. There is much difference of opinion among Russian historians as to the extent of the influence of this hundred years of Mongol domination, but it is now generally agreed that the direct influence was slight. "Scratch a Russian and you find a Tatar" is a maxim which ought to be relegated to the more superficial generation which invented it. The Tatars themselves were not entirely the barbarians they have been represented. They were, as one finds Mongol peoples in Siberia to-day, hospitable, good-natured, very just to their women folk, and tolerant in regard to religion ; though they were ruthless in war and harshly autocratic as princes. They made no effort to convert the Russians to Islam or to alter their ways. Their seat of government was at Sarai on the Volga, not in the Slav territory ; and, provided the heavy taxes were paid, and military contingents found, and the chiefs came at certain periods to be reminded of their vassalage, they interfered little. A few of the nobles intermarried with them, and their long coat was widely adopted, but there was no serious mingling of Russian and Tatar.

The most disastrous effect of the Tatar dominion was that it gave Russian princes another and worse example of luxurious autocracy, and it further

degraded the life of the people. If any person be tempted to fancy that it was the Slav nature to yield to these influences, let him turn to the contemporary history of Poland and Bohemia. There the Slavs had the advantage of being nearer geographically to the countries in which culture was advancing, and of being united to them in religious belief. I have on an earlier page referred to the disastrous influence in Europe of the fierce hostility between eastern and western Christianity. This has been an important factor in the unhappy development of Russia. By the thirteenth century the school-system was fully developed in Europe, and there was a constant cultural interchange, as well as a stimulating intercourse, between one country and another. Progress always arises from cultural contact of this kind. We saw that the Slavs of Prague were highly esteemed at, and in close correspondence with, Oxford University. Both the Czechs and the Poles amply proved that the Slav was as capable of progress as any other when the path was revealed to him.

But the Russians were isolated from these Roman Catholic, and therefore hostile, countries. They were in cultural contact only with Constantinople, and the Byzantine civilisation was effete and immoral. Deeds as brutal as any of Dchingis Khan constantly defiled the palace-life at Constantinople, and the worst autocrats were generally supported by the clergy. In this way the Christianity which

helped to unite and stimulate the other races of Europe merely linked Russia with a remote and half-barbaric power, which was nearing extinction. The Byzantine influence was positively evil for Russia, since it brought to the people the spirit of weary and fatalistic submission. When the despotic and extortionate Mongol came, therefore, there was not a tithe of the vigorous and self-assertive spirit which was needed to cast off his yoke. One is puzzled sometimes to read that the Slav is essentially democratic. He is : but only within the limits of his village-life. In a normal environment he would have gone on from democratic organisation of his village-life to a larger structure, but he had passed into an abnormal environment. His race was scattered thinly over one of the mightiest plains in the world. Even now Russian villages are often ten or fifteen miles apart, with poor means of communication. We can imagine the life of those earlier years. It favoured communism, but not large organisation, either military or civil. So the scattered millions continued to raise their corn and flax during the summer months, and to most of them the change of rulers meant only a heavier burden of taxes, and a more degrading absorption than ever in the hard labours and few coarse pleasures of their life. The growth of the Church added to the burden, from this point of view. The chances of the harvest or the cattle, or of success in avoiding disease or fire, depended on the perform-

ance of certain rites ; and churches and monasteries grew rich and numerous.

During these centuries, therefore, when Europe at large was advancing toward the Renaissance, the Russians were just as naturally deteriorating, and it is sheer nonsense to speak of their "impermeability to western culture," and to wonder if this is due to Mongol influence. In the fifteenth century, however, the Mongol empire decayed, and the turn of the Muscovite came. Some parts of Russia—Novgorod and Pskov, for instance—had never been conquered, and had formed themselves into promising republics. But the bulk of the country was an easy prey to the ambitious when the Mongols retired, and Ivan III, Duke of Moscow (1462-1505), took advantage of the situation and founded the Muscovite dynasty. Moscow was at that time merely a cluster of huts round the Duke's "palace," but Ivan was vigorous and unscrupulous, as well as ambitious. By conquest, by marriage, and by chicanery, he annexed to his Duchy the greater part of Russia to the north-east and north-west of Moscow, including the republics of Novgorod and Pskov. He entered into relations with Hungary and Austria, brought western architects to Russia, and adorned his court with a barbaric splendour. His son, Ivan the Terrible, continued the program of annexation, and in an incredibly short time his rule extended to the Ural Mountains and the Caspian, and overflowed into Siberia. Another great

religious schism had occurred, and, although Poland and Turkey barred the way westward, Ivan contrived to get into touch with Protestant England through Archangel. He persuaded himself that he was the true successor of the Byzantine emperors, and he borrowed their imperial title (Tsar = Kaiser or Cæsar), and their ensign of the double-headed eagle.

I am concerned only with the effect on the Russian people of this establishment of the Muscovite Empire. The unification was in itself an advantage, and the contact with western civilisation was even more profitable. We need not speculate what the effect would have been if Russia had been left in its communist condition, without a central government, because no land in Europe could long have remained in that defenceless condition. Indeed, quite apart from defence, Russia essentially needed some force that would overcome the benumbing effect of its monotonous spaciousness and bring some fresh stimulation to the minds of its scattered millions. But the founders of the Muscovite dynasty had no exalted views of public service, and were almost content to strengthen and enrich themselves and their successors. Ivan III had dispossessed thousands of land-owners in the northern republics, and had bestowed the land on military supporters, who were to found a dynastic rather than a national aristocracy. Ivan IV was merely a gifted barbarian. His cruelty was indescribable, and he

inaugurated one of the worst of Muscovite institutions : the State-monopoly of spirits. He opened taverns and pressed the sale of *vodka* very energetically. The *knot* and the torture were employed more freely than ever, and his lavish generosity to the Church—he was intensely religious—securely attached that institution to his dynasty. For the great mass of the Russian people the founding of the Empire brought no improvement whatever. They still groaned under heavy taxes and military requisitions, and there was neither stimulation of their faint intellectual life nor relief of their economic burden.

Until the end of the seventeenth century the Russian people remained in this condition. The Empire still grew. In the seventeenth century the Kazaks (Cossacks), a people of mixed Tatar and Russian ancestry, who led a lawless life in the steppes of the Don and the Dnieper, were received in the Tsar's dominions, and they brought with them a large tract of Siberia which they had conquered. Presently the Muscovite dynasty fell into the customary decay and schism, and there was a period of sanguinary anarchy, complicated by inroads of the Poles and the Swedes, which ended, in 1663, in the elevation to the throne of the first of the Romanovs, a young noble named Michael. These changes had no beneficent influence on the country. The court grew in pretentious splendour, though Moscow itself remained, until near the end of the seventeenth

century, only a colony of officers, officials, and priests clustering round the palace. Apart from Moscow there were only a few market- or fair-towns, of modest proportions and very primitive character. Russia remained a vast, monotonous plain, roadless and endless, with its widely dispersed villages linked only by a slender and unstimulating commerce, and an army of tax-gatherers.

We have some idea, from early colonial experience in modern times, of the effect of such a dispersion. In one of our colonies a civil servant told me that, only a few decades ago, he had occasion one day to seek his chief hurriedly, and forced his way into the inn where the official was. He found him, in the middle of the day, with the inn-keeper and the few other leading men of the colonial settlement, playing American grab amidst a forest of bottles, using as a table the naked body of an intoxicated barmaid. Yet our colonial settlements had larger interests than there were in an early Russian village, and they were peopled by men with at least memories to discuss. The climate of Russia increased the evil influence of its spaciousness. Over the enormously greater part of the country there are virtually two seasons—the winter and the summer,—and they are of equal length. For six months the land is a wilderness of ice and snow, and the family huddle round the stove in the tiny, insanitary room, making the year's clothing or vegetating ; eating, drinking, breeding, and sleeping. With the sudden

melting of the soil in April all pour into the open, and in six months of intense and incessant work, with the most primitive of agricultural implements and methods, they raise their year's food, the material of their clothing, and the Tsar's share of their industry. A little village-gossip, and an occasional hour of mechanical devotions, performed by a priest almost as ignorant and coarse as themselves, are the only variations of their existence. So the life ran, century after century, and the character of the *moujik* was "formed." The fact which it is essential to bear in mind in interpreting the Russian character is this continuity, through two millennia, of the drab, benumbing life of the tiller of the soil under exceptional conditions ; and more than eighty per cent. of the Russians are still agricultural workers, and a large proportion of the officials and artisans are the sons of the peasants of yesterday.

Up to this point there is no reason to regard the Russian peasants as materially different from the peasants of any other country. The agricultural workers of France and England were just as coarse, ignorant, and helpless. Travellers are not always discriminating in their judgments, as we have previously noticed. They are themselves, in the very nature of things, educated men, generally from the cities, and they are rarely careful to compare the peasantry of a foreign land with the peasantry of their own. They are too apt to gauge them by the standards of London or Paris : they speak enthu-

sياistically of the hospitality, because it is unfamiliar (and largely unnecessary) in cities, and deplore the unfamiliar ignorance and coarseness. We may assuredly say that Russian life was no worse than agricultural life generally in Europe before the nineteenth century : or, at the most, we may make certain reserves as to respect for property and truthfulness which I will analyse later. How far the agricultural workers of other lands have advanced since those days we need not precisely determine. There has been considerable progress, and it remains to see why Russian character did not advance in the same proportion. It is not enough —indeed, it is not accurate—to give as an explanation the fact that serfdom was retained in Russia until 1861 ; because serfdom hardly existed in Russia until the end of the eighteenth century. Nor is it enough, though it is a large part of the explanation, to say that the very slow growth of town-life and industrial life in Russia helped to maintain medievalism. We must briefly glance at the later political history of Russia.

Peter the Great (1681-1725) appreciated the backwardness of his country and determined to arouse in it a progressive temper. Much of his time was necessarily spent in rounding his territory and improving his army. He took Estonia and Livonia, and other Baltic regions, from Sweden, and founded Petrograd. He failed to win from the Turks an outlet on the Black Sea, but he made

further advance toward Persia. His chief idea in internal reform was to put an end to the isolation of Russia, and welcome the stimulating contact of the west ; and, though the philosophy of history had not then been written, he in this respect discovered the true spring of progress. Cruel and coarse as he was in many respects, he was not content with the barbaric splendour of his predecessors, and he introduced many of the educative agencies of the west into Russia. Even Moscow, the imperial city, had hitherto been grossly illiterate. Libraries and museums were opened, the ancient calendar was reformed, industry was stimulated, and, when the clergy resisted reform, he abolished the Patriarchate, and put the Church under the control of the Holy Synod, which has since governed it. The nobility was entirely re-modelled, and even the ancient costume—the long robe and beard borrowed from the Mongols—was rigorously assailed.

Yet Peter the Great did little for the mass of his people, and in the period which followed his death the very instrument which he had designed for the improvement of his Empire led to its deterioration. We have already seen, in the case of Turkey and the Balkans, how formidable a task it is to elevate a nation in a few years above the medieval stage of culture : to attempt to compress into a generation the development which occupied several centuries in the other nations of Europe. Patience and per-

sistence are of greater value than energy, and the work of Peter the Great failed in the same way as the effort of Charlemagne had done. He provided no successor in the work, and the clergy and other reactionaries soon ensured that the limited reform he had established should not be extended to the masses. As a result, the condition of the mass of the people became worse. Contact with Germany and the west made the nobles more luxurious and avaricious, and a heavier burden than ever fell upon the peasants. It was in this period that they passed into a condition of real serfdom, which led to further deterioration.

In the successive enlargements of Russia new and virginal estates were thrown open to cultivation, and numbers of families trekked to the distant regions to work the richer soil. They hired the soil from the State, or from an individual owner, and the payment of rent (in labour or produce) and of taxes laid a heavy burden on their summer exertions. Hence the readiness with which they moved to more productive and less burdened regions. But their departure only increased the burden of the families which remained on the old land. The commune as a whole was held responsible for the taxes, and the decrease in the number of families constituting it made the share of each larger. The land-owners, moreover, could not so easily obtain the labour they needed in the summer, or hire out their lands in return for a share of the produce. At the begin-

ning of the seventeenth century, therefore, the land-owners and the communes petitioned the Tsar to forbid this migration of families, and a law to that effect was passed in 1699. Thus the state of serfdom was virtually created, and its evils were gradually developed. The State itself began to transfer bodies of peasants for the cultivation of new and difficult lands, and private land-owners obtained permission to effect similar transfers. In the course of the eighteenth century this system led to abuses little different from those of black-slavery. Court-favourites obtained enormous stretches of land, with thousands of peasants included like cattle in the gift : the knout was assiduously employed ; even families were divided, and the children sold to other land-owners. The peasants themselves innocently opened the way to many of these abuses by—for instance—requesting a land-owner to take a sum of money when a girl was eager to pass into another commune for the purpose of marriage.

Thus while Russia was nominally learning wisdom and refinement from the west, it was in some respects sinking backward toward medieval features which it had hitherto escaped. We may recall that Prussia, its principal tutor, was at that time far behind England and France, and did not itself abolish serfdom until the beginning of the nineteenth century. In fact, the German influence which Peter had introduced quickly led to a degeneration, instead of an elevation, of the Russian court,

and for nearly a century there flourished a corruption which favoured the depression of the mass of the people.

Peter had married a Livonian servant-girl ; a fleshy, coarse, and illiterate wench who had caught the eye of one of his generals, and become his mistress. When Peter died, his widow, now Catherine I, though unable to sign her name, occupied the throne, or virtually shared it with her former lover, Menshikoff, who had once been a cook at Moscow. Catherine's reign was short, and the reign of her grandson equally short ; and the nobles, thinking that the rule of a woman would enable them to recover some of the power the autocracy had absorbed, offered the crown to Anne, Duchess of Courland, a niece of Peter the Great. She promptly extinguished their pretensions, and shared her power and her affections with the son of a Courland groom. I need not enter into the details of that miserable phase of Russian history from the death of Peter the Great to the accession of Alexander I (1801). Most people will be familiar with the picture, which the records of the time afford us, of Peter III (husband of Catherine the Great), boring holes in the chamber of his aunt, the Empress Elizabeth (daughter of Peter the Great), in order that he and his drunken companions might stealthily witness the drunken orgies of the Empress and her lovers. Yet Elizabeth was more religious and less coarse than either Anne or Catherine had

been. Peter himself was a vicious and drunken lout, and, when Elizabeth died, the young Catherine conspired successfully against him, and entered upon her well-known career. Catherine was a German, with a feeble strain of the Russian imperial blood in her veins, but she encouraged the substitution of French for German influence, and the court improved.

The fresh acquisitions of territory—of South Finland, Poland, and the Crimea—during this period do not concern us here; nor is it very material to describe how Catherine prosecuted Peter the Great's design of educating the nobility. It is enough to observe that by the beginning of the nineteenth century the Russian Empire had occupied most of the territory which it embraces to-day, and the aristocracy was not inferior, in manners or culture, to that of other countries in Europe. The modern Romanovs are, of course, just as much German in blood as they are Russian. Since the time of Peter the Great it has been the almost unvarying practice for them to marry German princesses. The nobility also is very considerably mixed in origin. Yet the ease with which the nobles and the educated class accepted the culture of western Europe should reassure those who fancy that there is some native impenetrability or reluctance of the Slav character. They found no more difficulty than the Poles and the Czechs had done in adopting, adapting, and developing the ideas of the western

nations. Russian scientific culture has no slight distinction in the brilliant chronicle of the nineteenth century, and Russian novelists are, perhaps, better known in the world at large than German novelists, and do not present any common peculiarity of temperament to the English or American reader. But of Russian literary and professional men we shall see more in the sequel.

We may, however, at once dismiss the idea that there is something distinctive in the psychology of the Slav which explains, or helps to explain, the stagnation of the country. This idea has been set forth by superficial observers who were unacquainted with history, and has been supported by interested politicians. The massive internal problem of Russia is whether it shall abandon autocracy and adopt the constitutional system of western nations. This change did not occur in any country without a grave, and often sanguinary, struggle. England was fortunate in having long ago adopted some measure of constitutional life, yet the serious political reform of 1832 was won only by the threat of confronting Wellington's soldiers with a pike-armed and vast army of working men. In France, Germany, Austria, and Spain the change was even more violent, and it is comparatively recent. There are always powerful interests which regard themselves as endangered by the change. Now the reluctance to the admission of this western form of political culture in Russia—there is no opposition whatever

to other western improvements—is confined to precisely the same classes as it was in the rest of Europe : to the autocrat himself and his immediate entourage and dependents, the bulk of the nobles and the official class, the clergy, and a few conservative-minded members of the intellectual class. Such active opposition as we have witnessed among the mass of the people has been usually provoked by a clerical misuse of their religious prejudices. The outstanding feature of the history of Russia in the nineteenth century, and in recent years, has been the ready and general acceptance of western ideas, especially political ideas, as soon as they became known to any section of the people. The intellectual class was long ago converted to western ideas. The artisans, the next class to make acquaintance with new ideas, was also rapidly induced to embrace them. And the response of the peasantry themselves in recent decades has been, if we consider the poverty of their means of communication, so remarkable that the most drastic devices have been employed to prevent the ideas from spreading among them. The very men who talk of the unsuitability of western institutions for the Slav character know that it has cost millions to keep the peasants from a knowledge of those institutions, lest they should demand them.

Russia differs from other countries, not from some racial peculiarity, but because of its geographical and economic features. Francis Joseph or

Pius IX was not less unwilling than the Tsar to surrender autocracy, but the growth of a large middle class, which had in this respect a common grievance with the workers, made his resistance futile. William IV was as reluctant as Alexander III to grant reform, but in his kingdom the 50,000 rebellious workers of Glasgow or Manchester or Birmingham could in a few days swell to a formidable army ; and in each city there were plenty of literate friends of the people to enlighten and inflame them. In Russia, a land of no industries and little commerce, there was in those days almost no middle class, apart from the officials attached to the autocratic régime : there were no cities with great bodies of argumentative artisans : and the overwhelming majority of the people were scattered over insuperable distances and lost in an impenetrable mist of ignorance. The circumstances favoured autocracy in Russia as they did in no other country in Europe. Yet the fierce and costly struggle which the autocracy has had to sustain in recent years ought to prevent any man from speaking further of the impermeability or the fatalism of the Slav.

If we make a more direct and careful study of the Russian character, we are entirely confirmed in this view. I have on an earlier page referred to the very dark estimate of an experienced observer like Dr. Dillon. In sum he finds the overwhelming majority of the Russians weak in moral standards,

grossly and generally immoral, careless, slovenly, dirty, unenterprising. Numbers of popular proverbs condone lying, and intoxication is so lightly considered that a literary man may appear on a public platform in that condition without losing prestige. Merchants are not more honest than peasants, and are equally devoid of a sense of guilt. Teachers are as loose as their pupils, yet are rebuked by no public opinion. In a word, Dr. Dillon would distinguish the Russian among the nations of Europe for weakness of will and dulness of moral sentiment.

It need hardly be said that he generalises far too freely in his interesting study, and it is instructive to notice the passages in which he would dissuade his reader from passing a severe judgment on the Russian people. "By nature," he says, "the Russians are richly endowed: a keen, subtle understanding: remarkable quickness of apprehension: a sweet, forgiving temper: an inexhaustible flow of animal spirits: a rude persuasive eloquence, and an imitative faculty positively simian in its range and intensity." These qualities of mind and character, recognised by one of the severest critics of the actual Russian people, do not in the least encourage the view that there is something distinctively reactionary in the Slav nature. They indicate a type that would, in circumstances which favour development, be both progressive and attractive; and Dr. Dillon is careful to point out that the ordinary

circumstances of the Russian are brutally *unfavourable*, and that in special environments the Russian character has developed qualities which will compare with any in Europe. The Russian dissenters, on the one hand, who number about thirteen millions, are as chaste, honest, truthful, and sober as the members of any sect or class or race in Europe. They are Slavs, like their fellows ; and they furnish a decisive proof that the Slav will, under a suitable system of education or stimulation, attain and adhere to the same standard of action as the more refined members of any other race.

On the other hand, Dr. Dillon insists repeatedly that the normal environment of the Russians, designed and maintained by their rulers, is a sufficient explanation of their moral condition. Their souls, to which he ascribes such promising capacity as we have seen, "have been trampled under foot as by herds of buffaloes." One of the most painful features of Dr. Dillon's book is that he ruthlessly includes in his hard generalisations, not merely priests, peasants, officials, and merchants, but lawyers, university teachers, and even distinguished literary artists like Dostoievsky ; and, though we may not accept his charges here in their full extent, he gives very grave and very abundant evidence. He explains, however, that it is precisely on these classes that the brutalising influence has been exerted, and one needs little acquaintance with Russian history to recognise the justice of his

words. Social writers, journalists, lawyers, and officials have had a drastic education in untruth. Teachers have been given to understand that the only vice against which they need to be on their guard is the vice of political disaffection. A totally false moral standard has been used by the authorities, and decades of life under such a standard must tend to enfeeble the normal moral sense. Dr. Dillon finds "curious combinations of religion and rascality, of friendship and treachery, without the usual cement of hypocrisy." One can find combinations of religion and rascality, without hypocrisy, in many parts of the world where, as in Russia, the religion is of a predominantly ritual and mechanical nature; and one cannot admit that the Russian people are characterised to any serious extent by combinations of friendship and treachery. Yet one can realise that much moral deformity of this kind may result in a country where Church and State sternly control the public mind, and both are corrupt.

The drunkenness of the Russians (which is not greater than the drunkenness of England a century ago) does not surprise those who are aware of the Government's monopoly and are acquainted with the peasant's life. Some of our social writers would probably offer a deeper explanation, and it merits consideration. They would point out that a nation must pass through a period of selection in respect of alcoholic taste, and that Russia is, as

compared with most of the other nations of Europe, new to the use of alcohol. The sexual looseness is not nearly so universal as Dr. Dillon represents. There are parts of Russia where the chastity of a bride is exacted, and parts where it is not considered. In the matter of unnatural vice Dr. Dillon—if we judge by his practice of appealing to ancient Rome for a parallel—does not seem to be aware of its extent in other countries : say, Germany, England, and Italy. In regard to dishonesty, we may distinguish the dishonesty of the trader and the naïve disposition of the peasant to appropriate what is not his. The latter defect is not unconnected with the communist feeling which has never been eradicated from the peasant's mind : the former is largely due to the fact that the Russian (like the Japanese) is not originally a trader, and has learned the business from men of other races. Mr. Palmer, a good authority, praises the honesty of the peasants. In fine, the charge of general listlessness, torpidity, and lack of initiative is very plainly condoned by Dr. Dillon himself. He tells us that the enterprising foreigners who settle in Russia find in a few years that the environment (in the broad sense) reduces them to the general level of inertia.

When, however, we have made these necessary restrictions of the charges brought by Russia's *advocatus diaboli*, there remains an unflattering picture, and I have already stated that Professor

Milyukov, a distinguished Russian social writer, admits that "the general impression he gives is not far from true" (*Russia and its Crisis*, 1905, p. 14). From a judicious comparison of the stories of Russian life by Dostoievsky, Turgeniev, Tolstoi, and Gorki one gets the same impression. Professor Milyukov sums it up in the saying that the Russian is "good-natured and morally lenient," but that is rather too flattering a statement of the impression. Dostoievsky, that great observer and student of his race, declared that the outstanding characteristic of the Russian was his "all-humanness," his power of adapting himself to every circumstance and person, his native humility, affection, and meekness. Professor Miliukov enlarges philosophically on this, and assures us that plasticity or flexibility is, in truth, the distinguishing note of the Russian soul: that the character remains, in comparison with that of other races, indefinite or undetermined, because of the slenderness and variability of the social tradition. The Russian soul is, in this sense, a piece of human material not definitely shaped by a public opinion or social tradition or effective moral creed, and therefore freely behaving in a way which we call immoral. Since the Church of Russia can scarcely be regarded as a moral agency, and the State is the reverse of a moral agency, this view, in which so many seem to agree, is plausible.

There is, however, an academic element in this theory that does not wholly satisfy us. Professor

Milyukov justifies his view on the ground that, contrary to the general belief of foreigners, the history of Russia has been one of incessant change, and this has prevented the establishment of a settled social tradition. One would be more disposed to say that Russia has not experienced more numerous or more profound changes than England or France or Italy or Spain, and that the changes it has experienced have not affected the mass of the people as much as they have been affected in other countries. On the other hand, the theory of the Russian's "all-humaneness" might convey some meaning to the man who thinks that Burns is "more human" than Shelley, but it is in no sense a precise characterisation. British character a century ago corresponded very well to the worse estimate of Russian character to-day: it is not less human now that it is improved. Drunkenness is really not more human than sobriety. It is, in fact, impossible for any character to remain indefinite or unshaped. One would rather agree with Dr. Dillon that the Russian character has a very definite and largely unattractive complexion, and that this is due to the persistent action of a social tradition of a *deforming* nature. Village-life of itself evolves a definite moral character, though not, as a rule, a high type of character. In Russia this formative agency has been modified by the peculiar conditions of the economic life, and for some centuries now it has been thwarted or perverted in its better action by another element

of social tradition—definite Governmental pressure and clerical misdirection.

The truth is rarely written in Russian. I do not mean that its writers are all so poor-spirited that they will not brave the penalty. The fact that between 1905 and 1909 more than four hundred journalists were arrested and sentenced in Russia is even more instructive than the many instances of untruthfulness collected by Dr. Dillon. But the Russian idealist, as a rule, is compelled to write in a foreign tongue. Much that is thus written escapes, not only the censor, but the just pressure of healthy criticism, and we read it with reserve. There is exaggeration in revolt as well as in reaction. However, in one of the more sober of these publications (*Russen über Russland*, 1906) there is a valuable and close study of the Russian village by Professor Novikov, and the student of Russian character would do well to read it.

You picture to yourself the Russian village, perhaps twenty versts from its nearest neighbour, hundreds of versts from the nearest town. A post comes from the outer world, beyond the horizon, perhaps once or twice a week ; but as hardly any can read, that matters little. The Zemstvo, or the Holy Synod, may have built some kind of school, with some kind of teacher, somewhere in the region, but one does not send little children many versts across that bleak plain in the six months of winter, and in summer every little hand is needed for work.

If the village is large, it may have its school. And if the school is one of the little sheds with which the zealous Holy Synod is covering the land, in order to outwit the Zemstvo, which has been providing real schools, the children may spend a few hours a day in learning the medieval Slavonic of the ritual and in acquiring a great respect for the Tsar and the Church. Often they can scarcely read modern Russian when the short school-years are over ; in any case care is taken that their degree of "literacy" is not dangerous.

The village has its store, its inn (where the Government presses the sale of its poison), and a church : with a priest, the son of a priest, almost as poor and ignorant, and often as drunken, as themselves, respected by few and exerting no moral influence. Not very long ago the "squire" would summon him for an occasional carouse, and disdainfully turn him out, or have him whipped out, drunk. The efficacy of his charms does not depend on his personality. There is also a village-hall, where the *Mir*, or village-council, controls their immediate affairs ; though the Government has now ensured that the democratic *Mir* is controlled by the State-official and the land-owner. A pedlar comes at times with strange new things from the cities, but the chief innovations of the modern spirit upon the ancient Slav village are—the inn where they get drunk, the church where every rebellious impulse is rebuked, and the intrusion of a master in the *Mir*.

The houses are one-storey huts, generally of timber, with one, two, or (rarely) three rooms. There are no gardens, no flowers : perhaps there are a few ornamental or fruit-bearing trees near the priest's or the land-owner's house. There is no causeway, no road. If it is winter, man, wife, and children live most of the day, before or on top of the large brick-built oven, in the small living-room, with low roof and door and narrow window : perhaps well plastered with mud to keep out the wintry air. The man may make the bark-boots of the family, or lie on the stove and watch his slave of a wife put the flax through all its stages until it becomes the year's garments. The fire is fed with wood, straw, even dung, and until recent times there was, as a rule, no chimney. At intervals they take a meal of sour rye-bread and cabbage-soup. When the baby—there is almost always a baby—is hungry and peevish, they may give it a piece of their sour rye-bread, in a little bag, to suck. Meat they may taste on festivals, once or twice a month ; and the beverages are, as a rule, water, a poor sort of beer (*kvas*), and spirits. The cheerful *samovar* (tea-urn), of which one reads constantly, is only beginning to spread among the peasantry. An English labourer would collapse in a month on their diet, and disease makes fearful ravages among the millions of underfed peasants. Even the children rarely taste milk. And when the sun goes down, and the wife has prolonged her labours a little by

the light of a cheap candle—for oil is generally too dear, even in that land of oil—father, mother, and children of all ages sleep together, often in the foul room in which they—and perhaps a pig and a fowl or two—have spent the day.

In the latter part of April the snows melt and, like the birds and bees and every other live thing in that long-wintered world, the family sets feverishly to work. The year's requirements must be wrung from the plot of land before October, and there is money to be earned, by working for the large land-owner, for taxes and a few purchases. An industrious man may earn as much as a shilling a day. A woman, or a grown girl, may, by working twelve to fourteen hours a day on one of the large estates outside the village, earn from sixpence to ninepence. The husband will usually allow his wife three or four days to usher a new citizen into their world. But all must work feverishly until the cold comes down again from the north and seals the soil. Then the man *may* go off to a town in search of work, but will probably remain to spend the six months as I have described.

This is the normal year's round for the great majority of those eighty million Slav peasants : the real old Russian life which the Slavophile official at Petrograd tells the world is so dear to the peasants that they have no sympathy with innovators. This is the " healthy life of the soil " of an agricultural country. The winter home is a nursery of disease,

and the black bread and cabbage-soup give little power of resistance. At the close of the nineteenth century, when the death-rate of London was 15 per 1000, it was 32 per 1000 in Russia ; and in obedience to their priests the poor women continue even now to maintain a birth-rate of 44 per 1000 to meet the ravages of death. The nearest doctor, or nearest approach to a doctor, may be fifteen miles away, and the peasant is not sure that his superiority to the old charms and recipes is clear enough to warrant the journey and the cost. And then there are the lean years. Every year there is some large local famine ; and the rye-bread must be adulterated with chaff and straw and bark, and even dung, and the few cattle or fowl must be sold to satisfy the pitiless tax-gatherer. And seven or eight times in a century famine spreads its ghastly wings over the whole broad land, and no pen can convey the horrors that spring up in the awful shadow.

Russia is neither stationary nor uniform. Large regions—Little Russia, for instance—bear a more prosperous aspect than this, and of late years there have been devoted efforts, as we shall see, to uplift the people. Dairy-schools are spreading : railways are shooting into the land : industries are contemplated, even initiated. Unhappily the fierce struggle of autocracy and democracy since the Japanese War has checked much of this enterprise. It smacked of “ Socialism.” It was associated with infidelity. The Zemstvos (provincial councils), in particular,

were active in the latter part of the nineteenth century ; and their action has been paralysed. They were, amongst other things, giving the Russian children the education which the clergy had for ages refused to give. So the Holy Synod, subsidised by the Government, entered the same field, and to-day the clergy have 40,000 "safe" schools in opposition to the 60,000 under public authority. But these are largely paper-schools, or huts of little value, and Russia still slumbers over its stoves in its isolated villages. Let me repeat that the sketch of the life of a Russian village, which I gave in outline, was written by a Russian social student in 1906.

Perhaps these things suffice to reconcile us to the less agreeable features of Russian character. Now let us see how two thousand years of this narrow, monotonous existence have not destroyed the better capacities of the Russian : how the plea of Russia's unripeness for change is but a political pretext of the minority who think they might suffer from it : and how it is that, while most of the other countries of Europe discarded medievalism in the course of the nineteenth century, the Russians remain where our fathers were in the days of Napoleon. It is not necessary for me to give a full historical sketch. A few salient outlines, with detail here and there, will convey a sufficient vindication of Russian character.

Alexander I (1801–1825) was a high-minded and

quite conscientious autocrat, and he introduced several reforms into Russia. He was at least as good a ruler as any in that period of reaction, and his country was not notably inferior to others. Nicholas I came on the throne when the second revolutionary wave was spreading in Europe, and he made a drastic defence of his autocracy. The peasantry knew nothing of the sentiments which were pervading Europe : the Russian middle class, which knew them, accepted them at once. But there was, as I said, a very small middle class, apart from officials, in such a country as Russia, and Nicholas opened the route to Siberia for rebels, crushed the insurrection in Poland, and helped to restore the throne in Austria. A half century had passed without any material change or a very extensive demand for change. We have no difficulty in understanding it.

Alexander II (1855–1881) opens the modern and most interesting phase of Russian history. He was a benevolent autocrat. He extended the boundaries of his Empire (in Asia), and crushed the Polish insurrection, with Muscovite correctness. He punished Turkey, and encouraged its Slavs to regain their national existence. On the other hand, it is he who emancipated the serfs (1861), and there are historians who are puzzled that such a man should have been assassinated by the “Nihilists.” The murder was certainly lamentable, and even so stern a critic of the Romanovs as Dr. Rappoport speaks

of it as a sad termination of Alexander's "liberal measures."

The emancipation of the serfs has been described by some conservative Russian writers as an act which protected autocracy and undermined revolution, by conciliating the peasants to the "Little Father." No doubt that was in part the Tsar's intention, but it was a progressive, humanitarian, almost revolutionary step. In intention. In point of fact, it has not improved the economic condition of the peasant, though it gave him freedom from certain seignorial vexations. By the Act of 1861 some 350,000,000 acres were transferred from private owners to the peasants. The State reimbursed the owners (who promptly dissipated the money in the cities, instead of establishing industries), and stipulated that the peasants, acting in common through the *Mir*, should pay six per cent. on the capital sum for forty-nine years. The scheme was good, and it is said that the Tsar had been really touched by Turgeniev's descriptions of peasant-life. There were no less than 25,000,000 serfs in Russia at the time. But the corrupt officials permitted a large amount of fraud in the transfer. Bad lands were ceded, and the good reserved, and the peasant found himself still compelled to hire out his labour, after tilling his lot, at a usurious rate. The soil, moreover, was getting impoverished, and the population increased rapidly. Instead of entering upon the expected golden age, the peasants

found the year's round as drab and laborious as ever.

In the meantime, the reform-movement had taken just as deep root in the middle-class mind of Russia as in that of any other country. German Socialism was quite familiar to Russian students, and we can understand that it found a rich soil among them. Some, of course, advocated Anarchism: a not unnatural idea under a stubborn autocracy. But the far greater part of the "Nihilists," and almost all of the revolutionaries of recent years, were Socialists. They adopted and fostered the grievances of the peasants, and demanded more radical improvements. The Tsar had, besides emancipating the serfs, created the provincial councils called Zemstvos, with large powers, and these were devotedly spreading education. They not only taught the new generation to read and think, but they called into existence a large body of teachers and medical men. Industry also was developing, and the artisans readily joined the growing middle class in demanding reform. Alexander, a stolid though humane man, was alarmed by the revolutionary social and political creed of the agitators, and would go no further. As language grew more bitter, the censorship was imposed again and the route to Siberia reopened. The reformers disguised themselves, and went among the peasantry, pointing out how they had been cheated out of the supposed advantage of emancipation, and the Tsar

realised that he was struggling for his autocracy. It is never difficult for an autocrat to convince himself that, though the world at large is abandoning that medieval political garment, it is just the correct and heaven-ordained vesture for *his* country. The struggle became fiery, and Alexander was murdered.

Up to this point the evolution of Russia was quite normal. From the nature of its position and the scantiness of its development, it was later than other lands to catch the new spirit, and only a small proportion of its people could catch it at all. The Slav was not deaf : but he was very far away. And the same circumstances explain the next phase. Since the day when the Romanov dynasty was hardened by the murder of Alexander II it has fought the growing revolution, and the condition of the country has given it success. Alexander III, stepping over the blood of his father to the throne, seeing a possible assassin in every educated youth, at once arrested the spread of education. He curbed and hampered the Zemstvos and increased the power of the land-holders. He put his old teacher, Pobiedonostsef, over the Holy Synod, and that zealous reactionary favoured the very useful clerical schools against the public schools, and instituted a drastic censorship. Many conservative Russians were driven to honest reactionary excess by the Socialist scheme of the reformers and by the methods which they employed. A Slavophile or Nationalist school, headed by university professors,

elaborated quite a philosophy of autocracy. Not only were the Russians unsuited for the western institutions, but the west itself, with its Darwinism and Rationalism, had gone lamentably astray and was tormented with social and religious discord. Russia, crushing these hot-brained innovators, would exhibit to the world a model State, founded on the Christian doctrine of self-absorption in love. The way of progress did not lie along the path of reason, which the west had disastrously followed, but in the development of feeling. The Tsar would save, not merely the Russian State and Church and People, but mankind, if he persevered. Pan-Germanism had a rival.

Alexander III needed no philosophic support. He would at least save the autocracy and the Church, and with open eyes he decreed that every innovator must go into exile, or into prison, or into eternity. One remembers the last outflame of Swinburne's sinking fire :

“ Down the way of the Tsars, awhile in vain deferred,
Let the Second Alexander light the Third.”

The Church was more than willing to co-operate. Even the gentle Tolstoians despised it : most of the rebels were Freethinkers. So religious prejudice was stirred, and Jewish blood began to flow : especially as the Christians generally owed them money. The Finns in turn must be Russianised, since they had a Constitution and a religion which did not

suit the Slavophile. The struggle crept from province to province, and the Tsar put governors, trustworthy men with despotic powers, over the provinces. In 1881 the Tsar's advisers had invented a remarkable phrase, which they called an institution : "The Regulation for Reinforced Protection." It meant that the Governor might suspend the civil law and deal with political prisoners, or suspects, as he thought fit. The recent case of Miss Malecka has given us a moderate illustration of the effect of this suspension of the course of justice.

This medieval agency for the extinction of thought and aspiration was inherited by Nicholas II in 1894. He was a young man, little known to the general public ; a man, it was said, of humane and amiable feelings, very different in temperament from "the barbaric giant," as some historian has called his father. But the domestic virtues and careful training of the young Tsar disposed him to respect the policy bequeathed by his father, and the court and officialdom pressed on him with a weight which it would have taken far more strength than he possessed to withstand. The rebellion spread, and the machinery for extinguishing it became more costly and more deadly. Mystic charlatans played upon the emotions of the Tsar and Tsarina : political adventurers like Plehve, travelling in steel-lined coaches in order to show him what risks they braved for the sake of the country, traded on his fears : a vast, corrupt, and costly secret police

fed on his suspicions, and provoked outrages that they might feed the more confidently and richly. In 1894, the year of his accession, there were 489 punishments for political offences : by 1903 the year's total had risen to 3978. Yet in 1903 the Socialists put into circulation in Russia—in the army, the towns, and the villages—395,000 pamphlets and two million leaflets. Since there were already more than 100,000 of these rebels in jail, in Siberia, or in exile, they were clearly not the handful of denationalised perverts that they were represented to be,

In 1904 the Tsar was pushed by his corrupt and interested advisers, in spite of England's warning but with the warm encouragement of Germany, into the tragic blunder of the Japanese War. As the real motives of the war and the real reasons for the humiliating defeat became known, the fever of discontent spread more rapidly. Lawyers, doctors, teachers, writers—the whole liberal middle class—formed Unions, and the artisans and awakened peasants became bolder. There were assassinations, strikes, mutinies, and bloody reprisals. At Moscow there was a pathetic tragi-comedy of revolution, which was drowned in blood. A "Union of Russian People" (largely Russian hooligans) was organised for the extirpation of radicals and Jews. The world gazed with horror at the rocking of this mighty Empire of "peaceful" and "submissive" Slavs. In sheer terror Nicholas II

granted the primary demand, and in May 1906 the first Duma met. It was at once discovered that, as soon as the Russian people were consulted as to the kind of polity they desired, their response to the Slavophiles and the Holy Synod, and to the superficial philosophers of other lands, was decisive. The Constitutional Democrats—an amalgamation of the Unions and the Zemstvo party—were in the majority, and they began a serious inquiry into the state of Russia. There were extremists, as in other lands, and ugly truths about the jails were dragged into light, and strident demands were made ; and so the first Duma was suppressed within three months. The second Duma, opened in March 1907, lasted a month longer. Then the electorate was “reconstructed,” and the voice of the people stifled, and the third Duma is so nicely balanced in forces of action and reaction that it cannot agree on the simple question whether Russia now has or has not a Constitution.

Briefly, again, we may inquire whether the Russian people, as is sometimes said, recovered from its temporary and morbid fit of westernism and resigned itself to autocracy. The official publications and statistics by which we might be tempted to judge this are notoriously not honest—as the first and second Duma proved—and the fiery pamphlets published abroad by rebels are, very naturally, not distinguished for cold precision. I made a very careful inquiry in 1912 and may reproduce a

few facts and figures which seemed to me reliable. The "Regulation for Reinforced Protection," or suspension of civil law and ordinary trial, was then extended to three-fourths of Russia in Europe, and the Governors used their delegated autocracy with brutal license. According to the official figures the number of executions had been, on the average, eight a year from 1856 to 1890. In the last decade of the nineteenth century they were ten a year. Between 1905 and 1910 the figure was more than a thousand a year. It is calculated that, if we include men and women shot on the streets, about 30,000 have died for political causes in the last two decades. A Russian General stated in the second Duma that 864 were shot without sentence in the course of the year 1906.

How many died in jail no man knows. According to the official figures the jail-population rose from 91,000 in 1904 to 174,000 in 1910 ; and there were at the latter date more than 100,000 in Siberia, and a number estimated at between 50,000 and 100,000 in police-cells. As the jails of Russia were built for a maximum of 107,000 inhabitants, and contained about 180,000, and their condition is generally fifty years behind the times, the mortality was appalling. Torture, flogging, and suicide were common. In the jail for the province of Kieff, which was built for 600 prisoners and contained 1800, about 500 died in one year : at Ekaterinodar (built for 360 and containing 1200) 500 were down

at one time with typhus : at Ekaterinoslav 1317 were lodged in a jail built for 300. In November 1908 the Russian papers announced 160 suicides in jail. And so on.

These few facts, coldly stated in official publications or otherwise escaping from that classic land of censors, suffice for my purpose : which is merely to show that the officials, who were trying to persuade Europe that the Slav was a mystic, contented, autocracy-loving person, were exercising the most brutal and bloody tyranny known in modern history to prevent the Slav from learning western ideas or, when he learned them, from saying what he thought of them. They are a more eloquent and decisive testimony than the impressions of travellers to the character of the Slav. There are still in Russia only nineteen towns with a population of 100,000 : only thirty-eight with a population of 50,000. Of the entire population of the Empire, only about 23,000,000 live in "towns"—mostly ill-paved or unpaved clusters of irregularly scattered huts and shops—and no less than 144,000,000 live on the soil. In England and Wales the rural population is 22 per cent. of the whole : in Russia it is 82 per cent. When we compare, also, the conditions of rural life in Russia, we shall not be tempted to seek in some mystic quality of the Russian soul the reason for the lingering of medieval features in Russia. The Slav is of the same human stuff as the rest of us, with

certain failings which do not surprise those who know the circumstances of his life.

I would therefore answer hopefully the question with which I opened this chapter. The Slav is not barbaric and will, when he is entirely awakened by a generous system of education, not endanger the advance of culture. He is fighting an heroic fight for his right to share in promoting civilisation, and in the actual European crisis, which has suspended his domestic struggles, he has so far—I write in April—surpassed every army in the field. The serious problem is, how long a small corrupted minority will be allowed to bring odium on the Russian name : the few million officials, soldiers, traders, and priests who are economically attached to the present system. Theoretically an autocracy has this advantage : that when one man, the autocrat, decides to set his house in order, the household will follow. And, deep and inveterate as the corruption of the Russian bureaucracy is, the Tsar has the power to resist it and effect a beneficent revolution.

Has Nicholas II the will and the energy to use that power ? His is one of the simplest yet most fiercely disputed characters of our generation. He is, as I said, a man of domestic virtue and quiet affection, who has somehow become the bloodiest autocrat in Europe, and has led his people into two fearful wars. He is by no means ignorant of the events which have made his reign crimson, or of the

grievances and demands of his people. He has repeatedly made investigations and given audience to outspoken men: and he has deliberately defended the outrages on Jews, Finns, Poles, and Radicals. Yet he sincerely shrinks from the shedding of blood and is entirely earnest in desiring peace. The Japanese War was brought on by interested men who assured him that Japan would not fight: in the present war he supports a just cause. He lacks energy of intellect and will. Let none say that this is a Slav defect. Monarchs are usually, on account of their international marriages, the least pure-blooded in their kingdoms. For a hundred years, and more, the Tsars of Russia have been the sons of German mothers: Nicholas is the son of a Dane. There is nothing racial in his characteristics. He is a nervous, delicate, mediocre man, on whose pale brow fate has put the heaviest crown in the world. He has not, thus far, had the energy to master his situation, unmask the robust adventurers who crowded about him, and despise the spiritist and pietist charlatans who brought him directions from heaven—or from the Holy Synod. He has been the dupe of a corrupt clique of priests and policemen, of domestic and ill-informed sentimentality, and of stronger and less high-minded members of his family. In part he has been soured by ten years of waiting for an heir and of witnessing court-intrigues in regard to the succession. There are signs that he is realising the folly of the Slavo-

phile creed, and that he may, after this stern acquaintance with realities, cherish the ambition to die, not autocrat of a vaster empire than that committed to him, but the man who at length awoke Russia from its slumbers and developed its mighty resources.

The task will be herculean. Reactionaries will watch every disorder with intense eagerness, and there will be plenty of disorder. Priests—though there are now many on the side of political reform—will represent in solemn language the growing decay of their authority. Reformers will be impatient, academic, and abusive. The economic uplifting of fifty million people who have lived on the wage of slaves will be a formidable work. And when the Slav is established in peace and prosperity, there will be a score of lesser peoples to educate. The Finns, a Ural-Altaic people (like the Magyars), are a remnant of the older inhabitants of the country. Driven into their corner by the Slavs, they were conquered and converted to Christianity by the Swedes in the thirteenth century, and were ceded to Russia in 1809. The Tsars swore to respect their institutions, and it is a matter of elementary justice that they should be allowed under Russia's suzerainty to live their national life in freedom ; and, brave, serious, energetic, progressive, and enlightened as they are, they will raise the prestige of the Empire. The Poles, a kindred Slav people whose military prowess and high civilisation appear in every history of Europe from the eleventh to the eighteenth

century, and who were worn by war and religious dissension into a state of feebleness, saw their kingdom cynically divided between Prussia, Russia, and Austria at the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth century. Their character has sunk with their fortunes, but a restoration of their kingdom would probably discover that they are still well endowed in intelligence and not lacking in energy. The Jews, the most adaptive and most keen-witted people in the Empire, betray the defects of character which centuries of gross injustice naturally engender. When that injustice is abandoned, and the Slavs are sufficiently educated to deal intelligently with them, they will incur only the complaint of superior cleverness. And beyond all these are the further millions of Lithuanians, of Lapps and Samoyedes and other Ural-Altaic peoples, of Tatars and Kalmuks and Mongols, of Georgians, and of the raw primitive things living among the Arctic snows. These, and the men who would choke the modern spirit in blood, are the only "barbarians" in Russia. The Russian Church has uplifted none. Let the State try.

CHAPTER VI

THE SOUL OF FRANCE

The supposed Celtic character of France—The Gauls probably not Celts—Early peopling of the country and mixture of races—Formation of the Frank kingdom—Character-study of modern France—The key to its political and religious revolutions—France the reverse of decadent—Splendid record in reducing crime and in social progress—The charge of vice and frivolity—The birth-rate—France leading the nations of Europe—Its bias for peace—Recovery of Alsace and Lorraine—Their nationality and sentiments—Danger of a plebiscite.

WHEN, less than twenty years ago, the flags of France and England confronted each other for the last time in hostile flourish, at Fashoda, we discharged across the Channel, and received from France, the final jets of ancient racial vituperation. If I remember rightly, *Punch*, that faithful interpreter of the country's virtues and vices, produced from its portfolio the traditional figure of France and represented her as a monkey : not a sedate, if unintelligent, anthropoid, but a puny, snarling, negligible thing, contrasted with a strong, sober, common-sensible John Bull. A few years later Edward VII persuaded us that our profound conviction that France was our "hereditary foe" was a myth, and that the Frenchman had really enjoyed our admiration for some decades. Forthwith France became, in the hands of the symbolists, a fair maid :

rather naughty and frivolous in comparison with England, but very charming. A few more years have passed, and we have abandoned even the suggestion of frivolity and try to persuade ourselves that there has been a religious revival at Paris. France is an heroic and radiant maid, a Joan of Arc, our brave, grave, and entirely worthy Ally.

Our age has witnessed quite a number of these rapid changes of opinion, and they might have warned us long ago that there was much folly and prejudice in our racial appreciations. Our estimates of our neighbours vary with our alliances, our creeds, and our tariffs, and we delude ourselves into the belief that they are profound and penetrating by readily accepting the most flimsy pseudo-scientific foundations for them. When Epirus was ceded to Greece, Albanian politicians solemnly represented to the Powers that this was a grave error in statesmanship because "dolichocephalic" and "brachycephalic" peoples—one wonders whether any person in Albania understood these learned words which the Italians had found for them—could not be expected to live in harmony under a common ruler. The misjudgment of France is hardly less ludicrous. The excesses of the first Revolution and the menace of Napoleon very naturally accentuated the traditional English feeling against France, but in more recent times that feeling has been wholly unreasonable. Because France outpaced Europe in political and religious development, and this rapid advance

involved a series of violent changes and struggles with reaction, we talked of the instability of the French temperament. This was thought to be quite natural—as natural as sexual looseness—in a “Latin” nation, and we took some pride in the difference of blood which gave us greater purity of morals and stability of institutions.

Then scientific men began to speak of a “Celtic” race, and even a Celtic temperament, and with great facility we deserted the Latin theory for the Celtic. A new kind of Calvinism arose in the disputative corridors which surround the stately halls of science. Heredity was represented as an inexorable law which preserved a type, physical or mental, through millennia. There had been the Greek type and the Roman type : there were now a Celtic, a Teutonic, and a Slav type. You could almost tell a man’s character by measuring the length of his skull ; and scraps of ancient descriptions and bits of bone were disinterred to show that his fathers two thousand years ago had the same measurements of skull and the same moral and mental traits. The Frenchman, being a Celt, was very naturally and eternally different in character from ourselves. We were quite scientific in regarding him as more volatile, impulsive, immoral, brilliant, and æsthetic than we. Difficulties were calmly ignored. The Scot and the Irishman were both Celts—both of one family of Celts, the Goidhels, in fact—but we did not venture to put them in the same psychological gallery, or

to say that the Scot was volatile, impulsive, brilliant, witty, and æsthetic. The Welshman or Cornishman was even nearer to the French Celt—he was a "P. Celt"—but he was not generally regarded as brilliant, æsthetic, witty, and orderly. These and other difficulties, which would disturb our new "profound" view of the French character, we declined to entertain. The Frenchman was predominantly a Celt; and he would go on to the end of time making new experiments in religion and polity, producing elegant and graceful and naughty literature, bubbling with excitement, kissing his neighbour on the cheek, boasting of his virtues and declining to conceal his vices, dazzling and shocking and charming his more stolid Teuton neighbours.

A clever and unconventional French writer, Jean Finot, set out a few years ago to discredit this new racial psychology. His work (*Race Prejudice*, 1906) ruthlessly exposes the contradictions and superficialities, the eager reliance on very insecure speculations of scientific men, the perversions of history and of fact, of these academic interpreters of character. Preferring direct observation to theory, and appreciating the difficulty of condensing the soul of a nation into a few phrases, he asked thirty of the leading writers of France—poets, novelists, professional psychologists, sociologists, &c.—to define or describe the features of the French character. The majority of them replied that it was impossible: the others nearly all replied by defining the char-

acteristics of French literature. The general feeling was that lucidity and grace of speech were the only assignable distinctions of French letters, and these are assuredly distinctions as compared with, let us say, German letters. But when one remembers how Richelieu initiated three hundred years ago the work of refining the French language, and how Goethe found that work not even begun in regard to his own language two hundred years later, we are not sure that we have even here a mere expression of temperament.

First, however, let us see how far we may venture to call the Frenchman a Celt and conceive him as racially distinct from his neighbours. In spite of the diligent scrutiny of the rich prehistoric remains of France, and of the references to early Gaul in Roman and Greek writers, we are very far from having a definite knowledge of the pre-Roman inhabitants of the country. Greek merchants formed a colony at Marseilles, and from the traders who pushed into the land their scholars gathered a few hazy fragments of information about its people. Later came the Romans, and Cæsar's *Commentaries* give us as full an account as we could expect from a refined Roman who bore much the same relation to the natives as a modern English general does to the remoter Indian hill-tribes. Modern science has devoted infinite care to every fragment of these Greek and Roman writers, and compared their vague accounts with the prehistoric remains,

and the racial types we find in various parts of France to-day. Yet we probably know less about the foundations of the French nationality than about the foundations of almost any other in Europe ; and, the clearer our knowledge becomes, the greater we find the blending of primitive peoples in the original inhabitants of Gaul.

Myriads of stone-implements, sometimes thirty feet below the actual soil, tell of races which wandered over the country for a hundred or two hundred thousand years. Then came the great Ice Age, and a race with precocious artistic skill lived, on the fringe of the ice-sheet, in the south of France and in the Pyrenean district. After these the men of the New Stone Age covered the land. It is quite useless to give the conflicting scientific speculations in regard to these peoples. When Cæsar traversed "Gaul," he found it, he said, broadly divided into three parts : the Belgians lived north of the Seine and the Marne, the Gauls or Celts (as they called themselves) from those rivers to the Garonne, and the Aquitanians south of the Garonne. We discuss the Belgians in the next chapter, and we can fairly identify these Aquitanians of the south. In the west the old Iberians, a pre-Aryan race who survive in the Basques of the Pyrenees and the Picts of north Scotland, had spread from Spain as far as the Garonne ; in the east the old Ligurians, who may have been the advance guard in Europe of the Aryan race, and were widely spread in Italy, occupied

what we call the Riviera, and a part of the interior. At an earlier date these peoples had no doubt spread farther north, mingling with the Neolithic aborigines, but at some date in the second millennium before Christ the first great wave of the Aryans, the Celts, had come across the Rhine from Germany and spread over Gaul. They were men of the Bronze Age, and their metal weapons and higher organisation enabled them in time to dominate or displace the earlier peoples.

But here we have a problem which still perplexes men of science and is not fairly confronted by most of the French writers, who are eager to make the base of their nationality "Celtic." We have already seen that about the beginning of the historical period Europe had three broad types or clusters of peoples : the tall, fair, blue-eyed peoples of the north, the dark, black-eyed, short peoples of the Mediterranean, and the "Alpine" peoples, intermediate in colour and stature, of the centre. These Alpine peoples have come to be known as Celts, and we picture them spreading along the valley of the Danube and pouring over France, where, in spite of wave after wave of northern peoples at a later date, they had taken such root that they still form the basis of the population. Even in our day one finds distinguished writers saying that the Frenchman derives his gay, mercurial, brilliant, order-loving temperament from this primitive Celt. The difficulty is that every single Greek and Latin

writer who describes the inhabitants of Gaul—the Greeks generally call them Celts and the Romans speak of them as Gauls—picture for us a tall, vigorous, blue-eyed, blonde or red-haired race of the northern type, not a short, swarthy, brown-eyed, broad-chested people like the Celt of science. The confusion is recognised by scientific men and is not yet satisfactorily explained. The Romans clearly distinguished between the Germans and the Gauls, because the Rhine almost completely separated them, to say nothing of a difference of religion ; yet they give the same physical type to both, and modern science lays great stress on colour and stature as indications of race.

Even French scholars are deeply divided in face of this difficulty, and I venture to think that the speculations of many of them are affected by their patriotic eagerness to exclude Germanic blood as much as possible from the life of their nation. Some of their best authorities still represent that, in Cæsar's day, the Celts had been in occupation of the greater part of the country for six centuries at least —it is believed that there were far earlier Celtic invasions, as early as 2000 B.C.—and that the Germans were then only beginning to cross the Rhine and settle in what are now “the Rhine provinces.” But M. Fouillée (*Psychologie du Peuple Français*, 1898) and other writers seem to be more candidly in accord with the old authorities when they admit that these *Galli*, who dominated Gaul in Cæsar's time

and, though they “called themselves Celts,” were so markedly of the northern type, were a Germanic people who had (as often happens) adopted the language of the people they had subdued. M. Lafont, who also follows this theory, gives a number of French authorities who adopt it. This is not the place to argue on the matter, and I must be content to state that the “Gauls”—the warrior-caste, at least, who opposed Caesar—are described by all the old writers as Germanic in type and are admitted by many French authorities to have been Germanic in origin.

This does not imply, however, that the population of Gaul was at that time substantially Germanic. As far as our imperfect knowledge will allow us to speculate, the peopling of Gaul seems to have been in this fashion. When the great ice-sheet, and the mammoth and reindeer, retreated to the north, a Neolithic race spread over the land, and an Iberian race overlapped and mingled with it in the south-west. Whether these were really distinct races, or differently advancing branches of one race, we cannot say with confidence. Possibly before 2000 B.C. the advance wave of the Aryan invaders, the Ligurians, flowed over Italy and along the Riviera, and penetrated some distance into the interior. Soon after that date the Celtic or Alpine race, a robust and darkish people of medium height, skilful in the use of metal, passed along the valley of the Danube and spread over a great part of

Europe. The Pennine range of north England and the Apennine range of Italy, the Danube and the Rhine, all take their names from this Celtic people. They formed a large and vigorous "empire." Increase of population and pressure by other peoples in the north and the east drove them westward, and they crossed the Rhine and settled over the greater part of Gaul ; two successive waves crossed the sea and provided the Goidhels and Brythons of the British Isles. They were predominantly an agricultural people, and, as we saw in the case of the Slavs, this occupation tended to civilise them, to make them sociable and pleasure-loving rather than aggressive ; though they did not lack bravery in defence.

The northern or Germanic branch of the Aryan peoples, on the other hand, remained, on account of its situation and climate, less agricultural and more aggressive. If our whole system of culture and education had not been until recent times (if it be not still) pervaded by a false moral standard, we might have escaped both the illusion that there was some difference between the "blood" of the Celt and the blood of the Teuton and the deplorable fallacy of regarding the less civilised and more combatant as the "nobler" stock. The ancient Celts were by no means so delicate in sentiment as Renan fondly imagined them. Early Irish literature (as M. Finot points out) does not suggest a race of great refinement and chivalry toward

women ; nor, until modern times, was the Gael of Scotland or the Kymry of Wales a remarkably peaceful and fine-grained individual. Yet on the whole the Celt who settled in Gaul advanced more rapidly toward the civilised standard than his Aryan brother in the German forests, and the result was that, when the Germans in turn began to cross the Rhine, they proved the more ferocious fighters. It seems, as I said, that the Galli who, about the seventh century before Christ, crossed the Rhine from the north-east and mixed with the Celts, were of this Germanic family. They became the military and ruling caste (like the Norsemen in Russia) and adopted the Celtic tongue and Druidic religion.

In the first century before Christ their unceasing quarrels and the constant pressure of the Germans —who were being steadily pressed by Slavs and Asiatics further east—gave the ambitious Cæsar an opportunity and he conquered Gaul. But, although the Romans had a high ideal of civilising subject peoples, although the Celtic language was displaced by a degraded Latin (or took refuge among the wild and obstinate Celts in the protected promontory of Brittany) and Roman law and education were introduced, the change was by no means deep enough to justify us in calling the French a “Latin” people. In what the Romans called *Gallia Narbonensis*, the sunny and half-Italian region along the lower Rhone, the Provence of later days, the process of Latinisation was naturally as thorough as in parts

of Italy : and over southern Gaul the Roman culture was freely received and developed. Lyons became an important provincial Roman city. But, except in the south-east, there was little infusion of Latin blood ; over the far greater part of the country the Roman influence was purely cultural. Except, therefore, as regards the southern fringe, where the basis of the population was Iberian and Ligurian, we must remember that in classing France with Spain and Italy as " Latin peoples " we are looking almost entirely to the language imposed on it. Even as regards the Gascon and the Provençal I would rather lay stress on the similarity of climate and the close historical relation for centuries than on the community of blood ages ago.

Thus in the early centuries of the Christian era we already find the French people remarkably mixed in blood. Its aboriginal inhabitants seem to have had various infusions from north Africa, and then, over a very large area, a strong tincture of Iberian and Ligurian blood ; later they are overlaid entirely by a numerous and settled Celtic population, and this is dominated by and mixed with a Germanic " Gaul " people ; and in the south there is a generous introduction of Latin blood. A relief map of France will show that it has two main strips of fertile region —up the Rhone from the Mediterranean, and down from Flanders to Bordeaux—with less favourable regions to the east, in the centre, and along the coast. Along these more fertile strips the mixture

of races has been considerable, and, as the Roman Empire weakened, the process began anew. In the fourth and fifth centuries the Huns were driving the anxious Teutons against the Roman barrier, on the Danube and the Rhine, and at last the frontiers were pierced and they poured through. The Gauls had, in the military sense, been greatly weakened by the Romans. Plutarch would tell us that Cæsar slew a third of the population and sold another third into slavery. They had, at all events, little hope of resisting the Germans when the Roman troops withdrew.

French writers, however, are still eager to preserve their Celtic nature and restrict the share of Teutonic peoples in making their nation. They point out that the first massive army of invaders, the fierce Vandals, passed completely across France and was absorbed in Spain and north Africa. No doubt the Vandals were harried by the Roman troops which still remained, but we do not need to go far back in history to realise that a vast army does not slowly traverse a country without leaving reminiscences of its passage. Later German invaders were invited by the ever-decreasing troops to settle in particular districts. The Alemanni (from whom the French have taken their name for the Germans) settled along the Rhine: the Alani in Armorica (Brittany): the Visigoths in Aquitaine: the Burgundians in the valleys of the Saone and Rhone. Thus even the remoter provinces received

large infusions of fresh Teuton blood. At last, in the second half of the fifth century, the Germanic race which was to give its name to the country, the fierce and powerfully armed Franks, definitively crossed the Rhine from central Germany and conquered what was left of the Gallo-Roman armies.

Even English authorities like Mr. Sergeant (*The Franks*) maintain that, although the Franks settled in and dominated at least the upper part of France, they were never entirely acclimatised, and they had not a deep influence on the people. This may be readily admitted as far as culture is concerned, but we must assuredly contend that they gave a fresh racial tincture to the blood of the nation. I need not, however, prolong this inquiry. To the Frank element was presently added, in the west, the large Norman colony of Scandinavian seafarers, and in later periods of French history English and other armies have contributed to the making of the people and the crossing of its various provincial strains. Whether or no the primitive Celt had a peculiar character which tended to propagate itself indefinitely, the French people of to-day can be described as Celtic only by placing a very serious strain on the historical facts. Once more a vague national tradition has been strengthened by pseudo-scientific considerations and enlisted in the service of political ideals or animosities.

A difficulty may be experienced by some when they read that modern scientific men discover the

round or broad skull of the brachycephalic Celt and the "long" skull of the dolichocephalic northerner or southerner in certain proportions of the existing population. If these definite physical characters persist for ages, and if the short skull is on the whole predominant in southern and eastern France, may not mental or moral characters equally persist? To this we may reply that there is, as far as we know, no connection between the proportions of the skull and the psychic features: and that, in point of fact, the French people are as mixed as any other in proportion of skull, and the bulk of them probably fall in the intermediate category which the man of science calls, in his impressive speech, "mesaticephalic." Indeed, some high authorities, like Professor Ridgeway, have recently thrown grave doubt on this supposed indefinite persistence of skull-types, and craniology as a science, in this sense, is in a somewhat precarious condition. Into these abstruse points I need not enter. Definite types of skull may very well survive where traits of character may be wholly changed. Nature may be quite indifferent to the length of a man's skull when he removes to a new region, but if the cultural and political conditions of his new home are different from those of the old, his character will in time be affected. So the physical type may remain amidst considerable psychic changes. One may study this in the United States to-day, or in the case of the Jew of many lands.

In sum, we must cease to interpret French character and French history in terms of this professedly profound and really superficial psychology of races. German writers have affected to explain the French Revolution as a revolt of the disorderly Celtic temperament against the political form imposed by the more sober Germanic temperament. Others have sought in this psychology the key to the French attitude at the Reformation, when the nation, though lying between Protestant England and Protestant Germany, remained faithful to Rome ; while others, again, would ascribe this to the Latinity of the French. Some find in this racial psychology the reason of the admitted grace and lucidity of so much French prose, and would even claim a delicacy and sensitiveness in the Celt which would give him a pre-eminence in æsthetic achievement : a claim that is at once discredited by the circumstance that, although France was the second country in Europe to experience the renascence, and has since that time remained rich and powerful enough to foster art, it has produced relatively few of the world's great artistic geniuses. Some, in fine, would ascribe to the Celtic temperament the richness in revolutions of modern French history, or the supposed greater prevalence in France of sexual license.

In most of these cases a patient historical investigation will furnish a less mystic and more accurate explanation. Take, for instance, the question of

sexual morality. Since Paris is little removed from London in latitude, we are unable to apply the popular and foolish theory that "southern blood" or a warm climate is responsible for its supposed inferior morality, and we have recourse to the equally popular and equally foolish idea of a peculiar naughtiness of the Latin-Celtic temperament. Now it is material to recall that four hundred years ago France was not more immoral, or not more moral, than England and Germany. There was no peculiarity of climate or temperament or sexual conduct in any of them during the Middle Ages. And the reasons why England has come to erect a standard of public conduct, and partly of private conduct, more rigorous than that of the French are not historically obscure. The Reformation was primarily a revolt against the immorality of Rome and the Roman clergy, and of itself it tended to convert the ecclesiastical moral theory into a standard of public morals. Peculiar historical conditions in England then led to the hardening of this standard in a democratic-Puritan rebellion which has left a permanent impression on the English mind; and each successive sect—Quakers, Wesleyans, &c.—as it arose, justified itself in part by repeating the Reformation-plea for greater conformity to the Christian standard of morals.

France, Italy, and Spain experienced none of these national Puritanical movements. They retained the old creed, and they retained the allevia-

tions of its moral code which the Middle Ages had sanctioned. As in other countries, Puritans were not lacking, but, as there had been no enfeebling of Church-authority by an acceptance of the Reformation, they had to meet the combined hostility of Church and State. The Jansenist movement, an intensely Puritanical movement, was so deeply rooted, and attracted such able men and women, that it took the Church nearly half a century to defeat it. The bulk of the nation, however, saw their clergy so widely and openly immoral down to the eve of the Revolution that they had little incentive to change their ideals. This laxity, the absolute prohibition of divorce, and the lingering of the medieval system of facile absolution for lapses explain the morals of France, Italy, and Spain more clearly than considerations of race would do. In France, at least until divorce was freely permitted and freely used, the old tradition of marrying by arrangement, instead of on the ground of mutual affection, tended to increase freedom of conduct after marriage.

Thus modern France inherited a tradition of laxity which nearly a thousand years of unchallenged exercise had imprinted deeply on the nation. The vice of France is, however, greatly exaggerated in England. A recent and painful case has reminded us, tragically, how untrue it is that in Paris sexual license is smilingly condoned ; and in recent years the greater facility of divorce, in cases of badly-

assorted marriages, has tended to raise the general standard. There are still, it is true, those morbid institutions, the *arrière-boutiques*, the semi-private *cafés-chantants*, and certain music-halls, which cater unhealthily to pruriency. Whether the British temperament would not produce similar institutions if it were permitted by law to do so, we need not speculate ; but they who would ascribe such things to some unfortunate peculiarity of the French character would do well at least to study the even more deplorable type of *café* which has thriven in modern Berlin and the illegitimate birth-rate of Austria. In any case, we have in this respect no recent innovation—no outcome of “decadence” or of irreligion—but the last term of a long tradition which at one time was received throughout Europe. It is not so much a greater levity of character as the absence of Puritanical law which explains certain undeniable features of French literature and life ; and this absence is itself better explained by history than by temperament. Two recent Catholic writers on France, Mr. W. S. Lilly (*The New France*, 1913), and M. E. Dimnet (*France Herself Again*, 1914), maintain that the moral tone of the country is improving. I will return to this later.

In regard to religious development itself much nonsense has been written about the French character. Historically, the great revolt against the Papacy was inaugurated by the French rather than by the Germans. During the fourteenth and fif-

teenth centuries the French lawyers were the first reformers in Europe, and in the thirteenth century the Massacre of the Albigensians reminds us that Puritanical heresy had taken deep and early root in the south of France. After the Reformation a considerable area of France embraced Protestantism and its growth was checked only by brutal and bloody treatment on the part of the authorities. More than once the rulers of France gravely considered the question of rejecting the authority of Rome, and, had they done so, the nation would have followed them not less easily than the English followed their monarch. The final development is equally unconnected with any peculiarity of temperament. M. Dimnet remarks that to-day only a third of the nation are practising Catholics. M. Sabatier, on the other hand, a closer student of French religious life, assures me that only about four millions out of the total population of thirty-nine millions are practising Catholics. Yet no one who has followed the religious and political history of France finds this difficult to understand. A change of religion in the twentieth century cannot take the same complexion as it would have done in the sixteenth.

It is more confidently claimed that we trace the expression of a distinctive soul of France in its modern political development. Carlyle, with his imaginative psychology and imperfect command of history, set an evil example of contrasting the French

and the German or English in this respect. France took the initiative in inaugurating the modern period for definite historical reasons. England and Austria had already eased the growing pressure by concessions either of constitutional government or of benevolent reforms : Germany and Italy were not yet nations : Spain and Russia were isolated from the main stimulating currents of European thought. England, in fact, inspired many of the writers whose influence prepared the way for the Revolution. On the other hand, it is from sheer ignorance of the details of history that many imagine the French nation suddenly breaking into hysterical demonstrations or hot-blooded atrocities. For a long time the Revolution was guided by sober and able men, and it was chiefly an unfortunate, though high-minded, act of self-sacrifice on the part of these men that let in the lower demagogues and led to the Terror. As the reactionary system of the eighteenth century was almost entirely restored after the fall of Napoleon, a second revolution was inevitable and it was conducted with dignity and profit. The revolution of 1848 was not so violent as in other countries, and for the revolution of 1871 one need make no apology.

I am neglecting entirely the earlier history of France, which it is unnecessary to recall here. It suffices to show that in these more characteristic phases of its modern history we have not so much the expression of a peculiar character or soul as the

direction of the common human spirit by special circumstances. We are too apt to conceive nations as competitors in a race. England, France, Spain, and Russia—let us say—begin with an autocratic and crudely superstitious régime, and must eventually arrive at a democratic polity and more enlightened creed. When we find them reaching the goal, or lagging behind, at different rates, we are prone to ascribe the speed or slowness to their national characters. We have seen, in the case of Russia and other peoples, how fallacious this is. Nations do not start together in the race, as a rule, and the ground they have to cover varies incalculably. Yet a comparison of English and French history does undoubtedly reveal differences of character, and we may attempt to determine more precisely the mental and moral features of the French people.

Since a distinguished French social psychologist, Dr. A. Fouillée, has given us a careful study of the French character (*La Psychologie du Peuple Français*, 1898), one naturally turns at once to this expert interpretation. Dr. Fouillée has little sympathy with the idea that certain traits of character are eternally associated with a certain Celtic or Teutonic race, and he is well acquainted with the fusion of races in his own country. He applies himself to direct observation and offers us a very lengthy analysis. It is true that Finot, also a Frenchman, ridicules this characterisation, and one feels that the

academic mind of the sociologist has not been content merely to record what was observed. The analysis is, however, interesting, and may be summarised.

Dr. Fouillée finds that the first characteristic of the French mind is its excitability : not so much in the common English sense attached to the word as in its physiological meaning. The French mind is very quick to receive and respond to impressions, especially agreeable impressions, and this leads, not only to a large measure of sociability, but to a certain explosive or, as Fouillée puts it, "centrifugal" character. The man's whole nature responds quickly to the impression received. It leads also to a certain promptness of action which gives the Frenchman the appearance of being erratic, hasty, and inconsistent. Conflicting motives may result in action before they are duly balanced and the sounder motives selected. Such a temperament, in the bright and genial atmosphere of France, is apt to be optimistic in normal conditions, and to pass into an undue dejection when difficulties arise. On the intellectual side, however, this tendency is checked by a faculty of rapid penetration and analysis. The Frenchman is better endowed with intelligence than imagination. In the mass of the people this intelligence takes the humbler form of common sense—which is merely sound intelligence not fully developed by training—and makes them, both in domestic and political economy, more sensible of realities and

less inclined to be enlisted in the service of illusions. In the more cultivated section of the people this preponderance of intelligence accounts for the high quality of French literature. As a body it is distinguished by a lucidity, simplicity, directness, and consecutiveness which give charm even to a work of science. It is also a consequence of this feature that the French are a disputative, critical, reasoning people, and are so apt to be thrilled by large ideas, such as liberty and democracy.

M. Dimnet's criticism of this analysis is directed rather to the sonorous technical phraseology, which I have for the most part omitted. There is too general a disposition to regard as profound any thought which is expressed in the debased Latin and Greek of scientific terminology. On the whole, Dr. Fouillée has assuredly indicated one of the fundamental characteristics of the French mind. Some of our English sociologists, such as Mr. Kidd, are content to repeat the worn formula that in the Frenchman the æsthetic sense is superior to the moral sense : which is said to be characteristic of the Celt. I have already partly shown, and will show further, that this is at once a libel on the moral sentiment of the Frenchman and an exaggeration of his æsthetic competence. In every respect except sexual relations the Frenchman is at least as moral as the Englishman, and in the department of sex-rules we must remember that moral sentiment has not by any means the fixed and uniform character

which it has in other departments of conduct. The highly moral Japanese had in this regard views and practices which they have had to withdraw into comparative obscurity since the country was opened to Europeans. On the other hand, the French are not a conspicuously artistic people, and their greater artists have not come in any large proportion from the more substantially Celtic provinces. Corneille and Poussin, Flaubert and Maupassant, came from Normandy. In proportion to its duration as a great Power, France has not an imposing number of representatives among the greater artists—poets, painters, sculptors, or dramatists—of the world.

Dr. Fouillée is right in claiming that intelligence rather than imagination—which is the reverse of the artistic temperament—is the French characteristic. There is a very general impression among unreflecting foreigners that levity or frivolity is the most conspicuous feature of the nation. Miss Betham-Edwards, certainly a lady who knows France, meets this scornfully with an assurance that “the French nation is the most serious in the world,” and that the French are “the least sentimental people on the face of the earth.” One is always apt to go too far in rebutting a foolish prejudice, but this agrees in the main with my own considerable experience of the French and with that of most of our intimate observers. We must undoubtedly add a few more human features to Dr. Fouillée’s severe analysis. Miss Betham-Edwards regards “geniality, service-

ableness, simplicity, and an immense capacity for enjoyment, that is to say, reciprocated enjoyment," as "the lighter graces of the national temperament." These are not entirely characteristic in the sense of distinguishing the French from other nations, but undoubtedly the wine and sunshine and traditional freedom, never overshadowed by a sour national Puritanism, give the French a geniality and sociability which one may find in New York, but not in London. These, however, are "graces" of character. Its solid and central feature is the predominance of intelligence. I would even venture to apply this to French as contrasted with German philosophy, which is thought to be so much more profound. Distinguished French philosophers have usually been syncretists, selecting the sound elements from various systems, rather than men who spent a lifetime in elaborating an illusion into a seemingly massive structure. It illuminates also the features of French political and religious history: and it expresses the nucleus of truth in the exaggerated saying, that the Frenchman will not marry for love but will go to the barricade for an idea. At the other end of the intellectual scale we have really the same characteristic when we find a well-informed writer like Miss Hannah Lynch saying that the French peasant-woman is distinguished for "a genial hardness" and that "a more competent woman does not exist anywhere."

This fundamental French character has not only

the infinite variations one finds in any large group of individuals, but it offers very different types in different provinces. For reasons I have given I am not disposed to connect this with inherited length or breadth of skull, or predominance of Celt or Teuton or Iberian or Ligurian blood. Nature may, as I said, permit physical features to survive when the character originally associated with them is altered by a new regional culture. The type of character is formed and maintained by the traditional standards and tastes of a large group, and in the old days each region of France was virtually a separate country. Differences of climate and occupation, in some places of religion, in many places of compromise between the culture of invaders and the culture of older inhabitants, give variety, and public opinion (common taste) fixes it in each province. Climate and long cultural association with Spain and Italy have engendered a greater vivacity and gaiety in the south ; though a considerable experience of the natives in the Alpes Maritimes showed me that their reputation in this regard is exaggerated. The Norman impresses most observers as carrying the national intelligence and caution to the excess of deliberative craft ; the native of Picardy has the heavier sensuousness of a northern people : the Breton is stubborn, superstitious, dreamy, less thrifty : and so on. One might, by devoting a volume to each, trace the natural history of each of these regional temperaments.

I will not attempt to compress further into a compact formula the characteristics of the French people. The student of national psychology is soon put on his guard by the remarkable unanimity of popular appreciation (or, generally, depreciation) of a neighbouring nation's character, and the remarkable contradictions and inconsistencies and hesitations of the professed authorities. The difficulty will be realised by any Englishman who attempts to draw up a brief distinctive characterisation of his own countrymen. He will find that while we boast in one hour of our common sense (intelligence), we in the next hour think ourselves distinguished by "muddling through" a grave danger or crisis—which is the antithesis of intelligence. He will discover that while we pride ourselves on our healthier instincts or saner public opinion, we maintain a coercive police system which implies grave distrust alike of our instincts and our public opinion. The truth is that human nature is nearer akin than is generally supposed in all nations with an approximately equal degree of culture. The creation of sharply distinct national characters is largely a means of displaying literary ability.

It will be more profitable, perhaps, to consider briefly the charge that the French are "decadent." The dismal prophet of national decay is a permanent institution, an inevitable and moderately useful variety of the man of letters or the propagandist. Sometimes he is a heavy misanthrope like Max

Nordau, sometimes a *poseur* like Mr. Shaw : usually he has a particular social creed which the nation is rejecting or refuses to accept. Mr. Whetham, a Eugenist, would persuade us that England is on the verge of the abyss : Berolzheimer, a philosopher, thinks that Germany is perishing because it has deserted philosophy for industry : Ramon de Torre Isunza tells his native Spain that it is dying because it is abandoning Catholicism. France has been especially favoured by these experts on national putrescence. It has expelled royalty, it has dis-established religion, it has neglected philosophy, it has maintained capitalism, it has lowered its birth-rate, it has sanctioned a literature which our police would confiscate in England. So the social prophets of the world turn their telescopes upon France and loudly proclaim each new symptom of degeneration. German historians have branded it as decadent since the days of Ranke, because of its indomitable democracy : Socialists declare that it is perishing because it is not democratic enough. Mr. Bodley and many others think it cannot possibly flourish without the throne and the Church : our clergy have announced for twenty years that its "godless" schools are ruining it : our moralists shake their heads over its levity, and our sociologists over its birth-rate.

E pur si muove. France is as sound, and is advancing as rapidly, as any nation in Europe. I have on an earlier page referred to two recent works by writers of the royalist-religious school (M. Dimnet

and Mr. W. S. Lilly) who have suddenly discovered that France is improving. Since there is not the faintest indication of either political or religious change, one can only surmise that these writers have at last yielded their prejudice to facts. All this literature, however, is characterised by the most deplorable vagueness. Indeed, the only concrete reason for rejoicing that I find in these two works is the fact that Paul Bourget was more or less converted to Catholicism in his sober age. This—and the fact that Zola and Maupassant and Gautier have left no great successors, and that there has been no large political scandal just recently—is made the basis of an assurance that the famous nineteenth-century “wave of materialism” (which never existed) has spent itself in France as well as in England, and the nation is returning to health and sobriety.

Against all this vague rhetoric, interspersed with occasional references to a few scandals or events which inculpate only a limited section of the nation, we have, as far as possible, to consult comprehensive and authoritative indications of the nation’s health. The surest and most weighty of these indications is found in the criminal statistics. Here we have official figures which express, during a period of more than half a century, the most important aspect of whatever morbid life there is in the community; and until a few years ago the critics of France laid especial stress on “the increase of crime” in the country as an indication of its degener-

ation. I have, however, repeatedly pointed out that France has, in this respect, a finer record than any other nation in Europe. Serious crime has positively sunk, though the population has increased, from 2933 convictions in 1891 to 1967 in 1910 (the last available year). Convictions in the Correctional Tribunals have sunk in the same period from 216,908 (or 230,060 in 1892) to 198,952. Convictions for trifling offences are about the same. Child-crime has decreased even more rapidly, and the number of recidivists has gone down 40 per cent. This absolute decrease of crime in an increasing population was, during the greater part of the period (the period when other nations were most heavily criticising France), unique in Europe. During the twelve years of most conspicuous decrease in France (1891-1903) crime in Austria increased by 25 per cent., in Germany (after making allowance for the increase of population) by 6 per cent., and in the United Kingdom even more than this. In fine, when the figures for 1905 were especially criticised and the vice of Paris was everywhere denounced, I found (in the *Bulletin Officiel du Ministère de la Justice*, 1907) that the increase on the preceding year was due to an unusual harvest of grapes and apples, that the increase of crime in Paris was only 2 per cent. as compared with 6 per cent. in the Catholic provinces, and that the consumption of alcohol was only 5 litres per head in Paris as compared with 12 litres per head in the Catholic provinces.

I find it difficult to persuade myself that this remarkable record in the diminution of crime, while it increases in the rest of Europe, coincides with a moral degeneration or decadence of France. Nor are there any other official figures which betray degeneration. Most of us will prefer the impartial data of the statistician to the impressions of travellers or the rhetoric of critics who indict a nation for a restricted political scandal ; and in every respect the statistics of French life show a steady maintenance, if not improvement, of the nation's health and prosperity. The figures of mental disease from alcoholic excess alone seem exceptional, but these apply to a small class, and it is notorious that, owing to recent and constant advances in classification and treatment, these figures must be analysed with great discretion. There has been the same *apparent* increase in this country and in our colonies.

The dwindling birth-rate of France is not merely consistent with these indications of health : it is in itself an indication and a cause of health. This is not the place to discuss such a question, and I will be content to draw attention to two facts. The advance of science has contributed so much to preserving and prolonging life that the population of every civilised country now increases with extraordinary rapidity, where it is not artificially checked. The population of England has, in spite of the terrible conditions in the earlier part of the nine-

teenth century, increased fourfold in a hundred years. It must be obvious that, if we persist in removing the awful check which disease and war have hitherto laid on population, we must devise some other check. The shrewd and independent sense of France was the first to apply this truth, and other civilisations are rapidly following. Berlin, London, and New York will ere long equal Paris in this respect, and the practice spreads through towns and provinces almost in exact proportion to the height of their culture. There is no reason but war why one should desire a constant increase of population, and the time is surely at hand when nations will rely on justice rather than superiority in power of killing. From a civic and civilised point of view we find that the result in France is, a far healthier and happier womanhood and a less cruel industrial pressure.

In social legislation—in efforts to promote temperance, extirpate disease, relieve distress in unhappy homes, and provide for the feeble, the aged, and the destitute—France is second to no country in Europe. Its political machinery is hampered, like that of other nations, by divisions of parties and economic creeds, but every nation of the civilised world has to pass through that phase of division and heated struggle. Its people love peace. Emerging from a terrible humiliation in 1871, they paid the enormous indemnity in four years and showed such a power of recuperation that Bismarck meditated a

fresh war. But they have never since betrayed a desire to embark on war for the sake of recovering their lost provinces, and under the severe provocation of Germany's attitude and tone on the question of Algiers they made commendable sacrifices. When at length, in 1914, Germany and Austria decided to break the peace of Europe, France co-operated devotedly with England and Italy in the attempt to preserve it ; though she can have had little serious doubt—in view of our guarding her western coast and of the now acknowledged conversations of France, England, and Belgium—that she would be associated with both England and Russia, and that the recovery of her old provinces was virtually assured. When Germany encroached prematurely on her soil, in the mean hope of casting the burden on her, she behaved with perfect restraint. And when the drums at last beat, a wave of strong, serene, dignified resolution rippled over the land, and her children have already shown that the bravery and endurance of their fathers have not perished. France is a valuable asset of modern civilisation ; and, had there been no other call for our intervention, we should have lain for decades under the cloud of cowardice and dishonour if we had not lent our aid to guard the fields and cities of our sister-nation from the blighting onrush of her ruthless enemy.

She will now, no doubt, recover Alsace and Lorraine, and it may be useful to add a few words on those provinces. That they are overwhelmingly

Germanic, as racial tests go, cannot be questioned. We saw how, even in Cæsar's day, the Germans were following the Celts across the Rhine. We have, in fact, seen that the Gauls themselves were probably Germanic, and we shall see in the next chapter that in what Cæsar called northern Gaul the chief tribes were Germanic. Let us suppose that in the Roman days the population of Alsace and Lorraine was a Celtic people more conspicuously impregnated with German blood even than Gaul. The position of the region, between the Rhine and the hills, made it peculiarly attractive to the German tribes. In succeeding centuries it was thoroughly Germanised. Only the small French-speaking area round Metz (about 450 square miles) remained in close cultural contact with France. In the seventeenth century the provinces passed from German to French rule, and under that rule they prospered contentedly until 1871.

It must be admitted that the question of their future at the close of the war gives rise to serious reflections. Mr. Arnold Toynbee (*Nationality and the War*, 1915) and others suggest that they shall, by means of a plebiscite, decide themselves whether they will remain under Germany, or be united to France, or receive their independence. Mr. Toynbee, as in other cases, nervously endeavours to leave the issue of such a plebiscite in doubt, but there are very strong reasons for believing that they would vote for Germany. No doubt the 300,000 French-

speaking people in and around Metz would pass to French rule with enthusiasm, but of the remaining 1,700,000 the great majority would probably prefer to remain in the German Empire. They speak German, and might without difficulty be persuaded—rightly or wrongly—that Germany would henceforward abandon those rough and insolent efforts to destroy their national features by which she has offended them. There is another consideration of importance, which Mr. Toynbee overlooks. They are overwhelmingly Roman Catholic, and are generally docile to the Church. Now it is most probable that the Vatican would rather see their representatives sustaining the power of the Centre Party in the Reichstag than incur the grave risk of allowing such a large body of followers to pass under the secular and anti-clerical rule of France. In the event of a plebiscite, therefore, the influence of the clergy would direct the minds of waverers. Sir Harry Johnston, though he does not consider the religious aspect, observes that "it would probably be found that there was an overwhelming majority of votes in Alsace-Lorraine for inclusion within the German Empire" (*Nineteenth Century*, xix. p. 41).

Since neither Russia nor France is likely to grant a plebiscite in regard to any portion of conquered territory, I need not enlarge on this issue. It may be assumed that Alsace and Lorraine will return to the allegiance they owed during two hundred years of the best period of European history. I have

earlier observed that in character they are much nearer to the Bavarian than to the Prussian, and they are entirely suited by temperament and tradition for French rule. Germany has splendidly promoted their material advancement, but her cultural despotism has created a resentment which should be to the advantage of France. If Germany does not sullenly avenge herself by an economic isolation, if France proceeds wisely in the matter of religion, they will not suffer by the transfer ; and Europe will gain by the enlargement of France at the cost of Germany. But we should do ill to conceal from ourselves that the transfer will leave in Germany a rankling and dangerous memory. Were it not indispensable to curtail the resources of Germany, since she has made so evil a use of them, one would almost hope that France would have the heroic courage not to claim them. There seems, however, to be no vehement attraction to Germany in the provinces, and we may expect that France will rapidly win their entire affection.

CHAPTER VII

THE SPIRIT OF BELGIUM

The tragedy and the heroism of Belgium—Bravery of the ancient Belgians—Mixture of Celts and Teutons—Division of the Belgian people into Walloons and Flemings—Racial and historical origin of the division—Great progress in the early Middle Ages—Flemish art as relics of a splendid prosperity—The blight of Spanish rule—Religious massacres—Character of the modern Belgians—Infusion of the spirit of France—The creation of a nation—Recent struggles as signs of vitality—Union of the nation in face of Germany—Fight for honour and existence—Debt of Europe to the little nation.

IN approaching the study of the Belgian character we do not find our way prejudiced by any epithet of popular depreciation, but smoothed by a sudden world-wide repute for heroism and by our sympathy with a foul and unmerited hardship. On an earlier page I observed that the Belgians differ from their Dutch kinsmen in attracting more criticism at normal times, yet being capable of winning a more acute admiration on occasion. The traveller in the Lowlands has usually bestowed more praise on the living Dutch than on the living Belgians. In Belgium it was the dead cities—Bruges, Courtrai, Ypres, Oudenarde—or the fragments of ancient splendour in unattractive modern setting which won applause. Brussels we knew as a city that had contracted a little of the charm of Paris, and Antwerp was redeemed by its Cathedral and its Rubens.

There was much to see in Belgium. Its dead things filled a bulkier guide-book than those of Holland. But they who travel in order to enjoy the charm of a living and disparate population returned to Holland rather than Belgium.

And within a few weeks the balance of favour swung violently in favour of Belgium. We listened with amazement to a story, reaching us in daily fragments, of the transformation of those careless-looking soldiers we had seen at Brussels or Louvain or Charleroi into a spirited army that held up for weeks the famous legions of Germany. Only a few years before one of the best-informed English writers on Belgium had assured us that the Belgian army was an undisciplined and ill-equipped mob, which would scatter almost at sight of the stern front of a foreign division. Instead, they flung themselves across the path of the mightiest army of modern times and irretrievably ruined its plans. Then came the reprisals : the infuriated, sordid, cowardly reply of the bully. It happens that I know well some of those parts of Belgium where the vengeance of Germany fell heaviest. I have walked leagues over the fields of Brabant and Liège and Limburg, and have taken coffee in the chateaux of their nobles, the cottages of their peasants, and the homes of their *cureés*. One thing at least the most captious critic of the Belgians could not have gainsaid : the tireless and cheerful industry that had wrought the countryside into a vast garden and covered it with

villages in which men and women were, with all their faults, happy and benevolent. And now from the meagre and reluctant paragraphs of news one pictured the desolation : the plough of war driven remorselessly over cultivated field and peaceful village and beautiful old towns, and even through red furrows of living flesh. Eye-witnesses and grave lawyers have confirmed the suspicion that such barbarities were done as had not been witnessed in Europe since the Thirty Years War. An English officer told me how he saw a terrified child hold up its hands as an Uhlan flew by in some local retreat, and he saw the brute deal the child a mad slash with his weapon. Belgian officers have described to me how, returning to a village which the German troops had taken, they and their men fought the enemy, and between them on the village street lay the motionless bodies of the women and girls. I have seen a photograph of that part of the University of Louvain in which I once studied at the feet of Cardinal Mercier, and Belgian officers tell me that the foul wrecking of that quiet, historic town was coldly and systematically carried out by a regiment composed mainly of youths from German universities.

Yet when Belgium saw the appalling price it must pay for its resistance, it accepted the penalty. " You shall defend your neutrality," Europe had said to it : not merely, as some seem to think, " You shall be neutral," but, " You shall defend

your neutrality." It has paid this ghastly tribute for what we call honour : paid it to the nation which announced that it wished to impose a higher idealism on its backward inhabitants. We know that, in fact, Belgium was fighting also for its national life. Germany had openly coveted that fertile and convenient strip of land between the Rhine and the coast, and it was one of the primary aims of this war to secure it. It counted on finding a narrowly utilitarian spirit in the Belgian people. Economically the country might become richer, and assuredly would not in any event become poorer, by being included in one of the most prosperous Empires of modern times. Culturally the union was represented as the undoing of a great historic wrong. Belgium and Holland were two outlying estates of Germany, tilled ages ago by Germanic peoples, and for centuries one of the most domestic provinces of the first German Empire. Somehow every plea was wasted on the ears of the Belgian people, and they have sustained what we must call—when we consider their freedom from offence, their poor resources, the nature of their motives, and the ghastly price of their resistance—one of the most honourable and heroic struggles of modern times.

As usual, we began at once to revise our estimate of the Belgians : or, since most of us had never given a moment's consideration to Belgium, to discover remarkable things about them. They were a Celtic people, like the Gauls, opposed by long

tradition to the Germans : they had the genuine idealism and fineness of sentiment of the Celt. We turn over our Cæsar, and we find in the second book of the "Commentaries" that nineteen hundred years ago they made a similar heroic resistance, even to annihilation, to the invasion of their country by an imperialist adventurer. We discover that their history during eighteen centuries of foreign rule has been punctuated by heroic struggles for liberty. We read how they spent their blood age after age in checking tyrants, and how, in spite of a foreign yoke, they built up a native and splendid culture of which hundreds of memorials survived until the coming of the German. The pages of medieval history shine with the terrible deeds of the axes of their commoners, under the old Lion of Flanders, and queens of the greatest nations of the earth were mortified by the holiday magnificence of the wives of their prosperous burghers. We find the northern Lowlanders, when they obtain their independence, spreading with great vigour over the earth and rivalling the English and the Portuguese in adventure and conquest. We conclude that there always was a mighty spirit in Belgium, and that what we witness now is only one of a long series of its manifestations. It is the same spirit that extorted the admiration of Cæsar, that flung back the French in the Battle of the Spurs, that revealed itself in the triumphs of Dutch commerce and Flemish art.

Let it be freely acknowledged that closer acquaintance with Belgian guests has not encouraged English people in this exalted theory. It is difficult, with all the sympathy in the world, to put oneself entirely in the place of a people whose home has been suddenly shaken into ruins and whose children have been stamped brutally into the soil. There seems to be nothing heroic about these pathetic, heavy, saddened faces one recognises in the streets, and men whisper to each other that they bear ill the little discomforts of temporary shelter. What, however, has chiefly puzzled English people is the fact that they are, apparently, of two entirely distinct and hostile races. A somewhat prosy poet of modern Germany said :

“ Das höchste Gut des Mannes ist sein Volk,
Das höchste Gut des Volkes ist seine Seele,
Und seine Seele lebt in seines Sprache.”

“ The soul of a people lives in its tongue.” Now these whom we call Belgians, and had imagined to be a nation of singularly concentrated patriotism, speak two different tongues and detest each other’s language, character, and traditions. They have fought bitterly for half a century over the language-question, and have had to reconcile themselves, regretfully, to be for ever a bilingual nation : indeed a people composed of two nationalities which must mingle constantly yet constantly quarrel. English hosts who were unfamiliar with the country put

Flemings and Walloons in the same temporary lodging, and were surprised at the peevishness of "the heroic Belgians."

In order to understand this situation one has to go far back in the history of the country : which we should do, in any case, if we would understand the relation of the Lowlanders to the French and the Germans, and the grounds of their divided nationality. After the discussion in the previous chapter I will not linger over the question of Celt and Teuton. Some writers have contrived to evade the difficulty by imagining an intermediate race, which may have cemented the two in Gaul and Belgium, but I do not attach sufficient importance to early racial origins to go further into the matter. What Cæsar called Gaul stretched from the Pyrenees to the mouth of the Rhine, and the northern part of this—north of the Seine and Marne—was inhabited by a score of tribes whom he called the *Belgæ*. They tilled the fertile river-valleys, or hunted and fought in the dense and far-spreading forests. There is no doubt that a few Celtic names are recognisable among them, but whenever a Greek or Latin writer describes the people of any tribe we have the usual Teutonic type : a tall, light-haired, blue-eyed race, with a terrible proneness to use weapons. Whatever may be the case about the central part of Gaul, the Belgic part clearly consisted of a stratum of earlier Celts very heavily adulterated by German invaders from the east of the Rhine. The Germans

would be especially apt to cross the river to the north of the mountainous region of the Ardennes and the Vosges : for the same reasons as in the year 1914. The flat lands of Holland, west Belgium, and the north of France would, therefore, be early and very thoroughly Germanised. They were the easiest path to the south.

We have here the fundamental reason of the division of Belgium into what are virtually two nationalities. The dividing line between Flemings, with their Germanic tongue, and Walloons, with their French speech, runs to the north of Hainault, across the middle of south Brabant, and along the northern boundary of Liège. This means that the Walloons, of whom one finds the purest types in Liège and Luxemburg, occupy that part of Belgium which slopes down from the Ardennes to the plains of Flanders, Brabant, and Holland. It is clear that the older Celtic inhabitants retired to these forest-covered higher grounds, with the valleys of the Sambre and the Meuse, as the German tide poured southward in the direction of France. One writer has justly conceived this higher region as a " Belgic cliff " on which the more agricultural and less war-like earlier inhabitants found shelter as the German tide swept by. The German was formidable singly as well as in troops. One of the old Roman writers somewhat spoils the idealistic picture drawn by Tacitus by describing how the northerner's wife would share his quarrel : a big yellow-haired fury,

she was, who fell upon her husband's opponent with fists and feet. They were, he says, always brawling.

When we examine the ethnographical maps of the Lowlands, we find every reason to accept this view. Professor W. Z. Ripley gives several of these maps in his *Races of Europe*. The broad-headed Alpine type is thickest in Luxemburg and Liège, and it continues, in diminishing percentage, until it is almost lost in the predominantly Germanic population of the western and northern provinces and of Holland. The Walloons really belong to the French race—their native language is the most primitive model of early French, or of degraded Latin—and the Flemings to the Germanic family.

In Cæsar's day there was, of course, no "Belgium," and no common rule over the score of peoples. The tribes had their primitive polities, fought with each other and traded with each other, and even had relations with Britain. The most powerful tribe, the Nervii, seem very distinctly Germanic, with a modified culture. They forbade alcohol, practised a Spartan discipline, and had a democratic council. They were hospitable and had a high sense of honour, but, like all the Germanic peoples, they regarded war as the highest occupation and ferocity as the supreme virtue. Farther north, about the mouth of the Rhine, were the Batavi, a fierce race from the Hercynian Forest, who are expressly described by Tacitus as Germanic in type. When Cæsar moved northward, in 57 B.C., the

Nervii contributed 60,000 warriors to the joint Belgian forces, and in a great battle on the Sambre they fought until only 500 were left alive. For their bravery Cæsar granted special privileges to what was left of the tribe, and the Batavi, farther north, he welcomed as free allies of the Roman people. So what Motley calls "the ferocious but unfortunate patriotism" of the early Belgians was shattered by the Roman legions, and the tax-gatherer and the civilising official spread to Belgium.

The division of languages set in at that time. The southern and western parts were, as I said, really a continuation of the Celto-Gallic country which the Romans were endeavouring to civilise. Farther north it was less safe for the Romans to penetrate, and the regions along the coast were marshy and unprofitable districts, fringed by dense and dangerous forests, in which some of the smaller tribes lived with comparative freedom. The new language, the native effort to speak the tongue of the Roman conqueror, was confined to the south-eastern (or Walloon) districts. Once, losing my way in a Walloon rural district, I understood the children who gave me directions rather from my familiarity with Latin than from my knowledge of French ; just as, on other occasions, I contrived some communication with Flemish peasants by means of a weird mixture of German and the Lancashire dialect. The north and west continued to receive invasions from Germany : the south and

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east were continuous with Gaul. We must remember that the south frontier of what the Romans called the land of the Belgæ was not the Belgian frontier of to-day. It was nearer to Paris, and the country was in every sense a part of northern France.

In the fourth century, when Rome grew feebler, there set in the southward stream of Germanic tribes which I described in the last chapter. Vandals, Alans, Suevi, Saxons, and Frisians were drawn toward the rich lands whose masters were degenerating. The pride of a modern Teuton in his ancient ancestors is unintelligible. On the whole they were ferociously recalcitrant to civilisation, and they were not attracted to it until those who had laboriously built it were no longer able to ward thieves from their town-luxuries and rich meadows. There were years of struggle with the dwindling Roman troops, of fearful massacres and devastation, of wrecking the civilisation which Rome had fostered. At last the Salian Franks proved powerful enough to conquer the other Germanic tribes, and Belgium, or north Gaul, became the chief seat of their power. Tournai was the capital of their kingdom, and it was, in effect, a Belgian empire which they spread from the Ocean to the Rhine and over a great part of France. But both French and Belgian writers would do well to leave the prestige of it to the German savants who are so eager to claim it. It was rather a relapse into barbarism than a new

civilisation. The picture which Gregory of Tours, the historian of the time, gives us of those early centuries of Frank supremacy could with difficulty be matched for vice and violence and drunken savagery.

Charlemagne endeavoured to enkindle some idealism in the world of sodden ignorance over which he presided, but his work was at once abandoned, when he died, and the great area—the joint Belgium-Gaul-Germany of that early Empire—sank back into barbarism and feudal demoralisation. The division of his Empire amongst his successors led to the creation of the modern nations of Europe, and the northern provinces, or Netherlands, fell naturally to Charles the Bold of France. None would then dream of regarding that region of forests and low-lying marshes as other than a northern fringe of the ancient Gaul. But it was convenient for the French kings to rule by means of officers or governors, and these became barons, counts, and earls of the various provinces, and thus prepared the way for the separation of the northern provinces from the south—of Belgium from France.

In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the turning-point of the Middle Ages, when Europe begins to advance once more toward civilisation, the people of the Lowlands were amongst the most progressive. Crusaders and mutual quarrels weakened the feudal nobles who ruled them, and the cities grew in importance. Ypres, Tournai,

Courtrai, Lille, Antwerp, and especially Bruges and Ghent, became prosperous and picturesque cities, their workers associated in powerful guilds, their burghers waxing richer every decade and winning high privileges for their respective communities. Motley's "five dismal centuries of feudalism" were over, and the vigour and industry of the Netherlanders, who troubled little about their distant foreign rulers, were laying the foundations of a great prosperity and a splendid art. The famous Cloth Hall and Cathedral of Ypres, and part of the Cathedral at Brussels, date from the thirteenth century. The old spirit of the Belgians and Hollanders had assumed a new and not less vigorous form. When, in the fourteenth century, the flower of the French nobility advanced contemptuously to strike down the spears and axes of these rebellious weavers and butchers and barterers, it was the French nobles who left their bodies on the field of the Battle of Spurs.

In 1384 the process of unifying the Netherlands and forming a distinct nationality was begun. The Counts of Flanders and of Holland had won the first place among the crowd of semi-independent nobles who ruled the various districts, and in 1384 the illustrious line of the Counts of Flanders became extinct and the country passed, by marriage, to Philip of Burgundy. Philip, who was enlightened enough to foster the wealth and commerce of so lucrative a province, gradually acquired nearly all

the other counties and fiefs of the Netherlands. Under his successors, in fact, all except distant Gelderland were brought under the rule of the Burgundian, and the Netherlands began to figure as a definite country on the map of Europe ; the provinces of French Flanders and Picardy were still included in it. To the student of historical forms and processes the union is interesting, and its issue might profitably be considered by those who imagine that such an aggregation of small units into a larger polity necessarily means progress. The Dutch were rather checked than assisted in their development by the change. The free life of their cities, which had engendered a vigorous and progressive spirit, was constantly endangered, and much of their energy was dissipated in the incessant struggle against a stifling despotism.

Toward the close of the fifteenth century the country entered upon a new and more exacting phase. It passed under the rule of the Archduke Maximilian of Austria, who became head of the Holy Roman Empire, and his son, marrying the daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella, succeeded to the rule of both Spain and the Empire. The Netherlands thus passed under the rule of the most bigoted Power in Europe just at the time when the Reformation was spreading among the Germanic peoples of the north. Their culture and their commerce had thriven in spite of the errors of the later Burgundians. The Antwerp Cathedral and

the superb Hotels de Ville of Louvain and Brussels were completed in the fifteenth century. The University of Louvain was famed throughout Europe: Erasmus of Rotterdam was interpreting the more cautious Humanism of the new age: the most splendid period of Dutch and Flemish art was approaching. Of Charles the Fifth's vast income of five million gold coins a year, no less than two million were extorted from the Netherlands. By wonderful industry, organisation, and commercial genius the Dutch won a prosperity out of all proportion to the size and resources of their country. The despised marshes of the coast had been turned into fruitful granaries, the great forests cleared for the plough, and every industry that Europe devised was willingly adopted. The little country had a number of towns with more than 200,000 citizens at a time when Liverpool and Manchester and Birmingham were obscure villages; and when the citizens met to witness a tournament or an archery competition, or on some great religious festival, the stranger from other lands gazed with astonishment on the massive display of heavy gold chains and jewels, of bright silks and damasks and velvets. In those days—days of heavy vice and frequent crime, but of overflowing prosperity and vigour—were raised the wonderful monuments which the military vandalism of the twentieth century has so foully desecrated.

There is no need to repeat here the story of

Spanish brutality in the Netherlands. The revolt of Luther and the Reformers spread rapidly along the easy and natural path of the Germanic languages, and by the middle of the sixteenth century thousands of Hollanders and Belgians were converted to Protestantism. In so rich a country the medieval Church had especially contracted those abuses which excited the anger and assisted the propaganda of the reformers, and, as the Netherlands became one of the first homes of the printing-press, the revolt was easily extended. The Church and the Spanish officials retorted with the horrible devices which were then approved. Hundreds of noble heads fell, and the hideous fires of the stake burned, under the shadow of the beautiful buildings which the free and joyous spirit of their fathers had created. Still the revolt spread. Philip II visited Belgium, and was quietly advised by the Dutchmen, impelled by the silent William of Orange, not to interfere with their liberties. He returned in anger to Spain, and soon the dour Duke of Alva and a band of Inquisitors arrived, with orders, if it were necessary, to exterminate the population of whole provinces. The tradition long remained in the Netherlands that between 50,000 and 100,000 were put to death in the horrible butchery that followed, and, though this is probably a heavy exaggeration, it is certain that, taking the whole period of struggle, thousands of the finer and more independent spirits of the Netherlands were extinguished.

The details of this ghastly struggle do not concern us. The issue is well known. The Netherlanders revolted against Spain and the northern provinces, which had more extensively embraced Protestantism, and won their independence under their heroic leaders, the Princes of Orange. Thus the little nationality of Holland was at length constituted, and in the course of the eighteenth century it rose to a pre-eminence among the peoples of Europe in art and science and commercial enterprise. What we now call Belgium remained a group of loosely connected towns and provinces under the exacting tyranny of Spain. Once more the inhabitants of "the Belgic cliff," the Walloons, avoided the Germanic tide that was pouring in. It is perhaps a singular, and certainly a promising, fact that the two peoples of Belgium have never confronted each other in war, yet the distinction in culture and language and temperament has had a constant influence. One must not, of course, exaggerate the racial difference. It was entirely natural that Protestantism should spread most easily in the remoter provinces, which were less accessible and had Protestant neighbours ; and equally natural that Catholicism should be most retained in the south-eastern provinces, which bordered on Catholic France and the Rhine bishoprics. In the intervening Flemish provinces the new creed had just that measure of success which we should expect. But the drastic extinction of the bolder spirits, the

opportune concessions of Alexander Farnese, and the loyalty of the neighbouring Walloons checked the spread of heresy in the Flemish provinces, and they remained under the Spanish rule until the French revolutionary troops wrested them from Spain in 1794.

I am concerned only with the psychological development, and from that point of view one would almost be tempted to say that the division of the Netherlands was an historical catastrophe. Both Dutch and Flemish provinces were at the height of their vigour and promise when the blight of religious war fell upon them. The seventeenth century is the age of Rubens, Van Dyck, Teniers, Rembrandt, Cuyp, Ostade, Ruisdael, Hobbema, Jan Steen, and a score of other distinguished Dutch and Flemish painters : the age of the last great Flemish architects : the age of the great Dutch navigators and admirals. A union of all the Teutonic provinces at that time would have afforded a larger and firmer base for the spreading colonial system of the Dutch ; and it must be confessed that when the Belgian provinces fell back exhausted into the arms of Spain they sank into decay. On the other hand, the French-speaking provinces differed little from the provinces of northern France, and France was steadily incorporating into its kingdom the more southerly of them.

Yet the experiment of setting up a kingdom of the Netherlands after Waterloo shows us that this

plausible theory is a mistake. In spite of all their differences, the Flemings and Walloons were drawn toward each other rather than toward their racially kindred neighbours, and they were prepared to unite against either. A new nationality, Belgium, had been created under the stress of foreign dominion, and by the cementing force of commerce. It is rather singular that few of the great architectural monuments fall south of the Walloon line, and none of the greater artists was born in those provinces : which is not a confirmation of the supposed artistic gifts of the Celtic temperament. No doubt, however, the economic advantage was as yet north and west of that line, and art flourishes where commerce and industry flourish. Yet the Walloon provinces of Hainault, Namur, and Liège were closely connected with the Flemish provinces, and the feeling that they were a distinct people, lying between the Dutch and the French, grew up instinctively in the course of centuries. Neither Napoleon nor his successful opponents could obliterate that feeling of nationality, and in 1831 it was at length necessary to create the Kingdom of Belgium. William of Holland had made the world-old and world-discredited mistake of aiming at uniformity. The threat to their religion and their language stirred at length the slow-moving Flemings, and they supported the revolt of the more fiery and more aggressive Walloons.

The revolt in Belgium against Dutch rule was

indirectly inspired by the July Revolution at Paris, and it is interesting to recall the circumstances in which the five great Powers of Europe—England, France, Russia, Prussia, and Austria—created the Kingdom of Belgium and guaranteed its neutrality. In France there was a loud and general demand for the partition of the country, and not a few of the Belgians themselves, who had been since the great Revolution warm admirers of the French spirit, wished to see the southern provinces united to France. It was chiefly in hostility to France that the new Kingdom was established, and England was the supreme agency in its establishment. There was at that time little to be feared from a disunited Germany, and it was in great measure in order to preserve the Netherland coast in friendly hands that England acted. From that time it has, in its own interest as well as on sentimental grounds, stood to Belgium in the nature of a protector.

We are now in a position to understand how two peoples differing irreconcilably in language, and with considerable racial differences, have come to be blended so harmoniously in a single nationality. For twenty years after 1831 there was an acrid conflict between the Flemings and the Walloons on the language question. The Walloon language has itself been abandoned to a few stubborn rural districts. It is an archaic and imperfect tongue, and has very properly been surrendered for French by

the overwhelming mass of the Walloons. And this acceptance of French has moved the Walloons to claim that it be imposed as the language of the country, and that Flemish be discarded, like Walloon, as a language belonging to an immature phase of cultural development. But the Flemings have naturally clung to their speech, and, apart from domestic squabbles, the struggle has been abandoned. Three and a quarter millions of the inhabitants speak Flemish only, and two millions and three-quarters French only ; while only a little over three-quarters of a million speak both languages.

Yet the fusion of the two peoples in a single nationality has entirely succeeded, and we have seen what price they are prepared to pay in its defence. One of the worst mistakes that Germany has committed in her calculations was the supposition that that Germanic origin which her scholars assigned to the Belgian and Dutch peoples would dispose them to listen to her designs. Living under the very shadow of that menace which Europe at large failed to realise, seeing Germany calmly lay down to her frontier railways which (being duplicates of a line which is by no means overcrowded) could have only a strategic significance, Belgium has for years looked upon her burly neighbour with dislike and suspicion. Antwerp and Ostend were the goals of that sinuous and hypocritical ambition. Under that grave menace Walloons and Flemings have drawn nearer together and have cultivated

that stubborn spirit of nationality which has incarnated the energy of both peoples.

This artificial creation of a nationality discredits some of the more superficial theories of race and nationality, and may furnish more valuable rules of guidance to the statesman. For it is patent to all who are familiar with the Belgians that there are considerable differences of character between the Flemings and the Walloons. Years ago I sat in an old Premonstratensian abbey and heard two monks, of long experience of both peoples, discuss their differences. They regarded the races from the point of view of their intimate moral experience as confessors, and, with that genial cynicism which experienced missionaries are apt to display among themselves, they agreed upon a formula. The Walloon, they said, is proud and rebellious, and is reluctant to kneel at the feet of the clergy; but one can believe his word implicitly when he does come to them. The Fleming, they agreed, obeys with facility the summons to confess, but is untruthful in his confessions or his omissions.

This technical contrast of the two Belgian types would assuredly not be accepted by Belgians generally as an accurate appreciation. Truthfulness is certainly not confined to the Walloon provinces. But it expresses, with some not unkindly exaggeration, a real difference. The Fleming is, on the whole, slower of wit and of movement, heavier in humour, less guarded in speech, less refined in

manners, more sensuous and more apt to be vulgar ; and he is at the same time more sociable, more hospitable, more expansive, more stubborn and unyielding when he has espoused a great cause. Not being intellectually active, the Flemings have, as a body, been content with the very elementary and biased education which they generally receive, and they are much less critical than the Walloons. In a Walloon rural district, for instance, I found scores of men, out of a few hundred people, bitterly hostile to the clergy. In a similar rural district in the northern part of Brabant, among the Flemings, I found a compact and unquestioning loyalty to the Church.

It may seem strange that, while the sixteenth-century criticism of the Church made much progress among the Germanic types and none among the Walloons, the modern critical spirit follows an entirely different direction. It is obvious that this is largely due to the fact that the Protestant tradition began in Germany and naturally spread most easily among Germanic peoples, while the modern current of criticism, in its more popular form, has spread from France through the peoples that are more akin to it. One must recollect also that the recent industrial development of Belgium lies mainly in the Walloon section of the country. The province of Hainault, with its great bodies of alert and educated artisans, has become more French than ever, and the popular critical literature of France circulates freely.

Socialism of a very anti-clerical character is widespread, and the fact that the Church counts upon the substantial loyalty of the Flemish peasants in maintaining its political power rather increases the hostility of Walloon and Fleming.

These important aspects of environment must not be omitted, yet there undoubtedly is some fundamental difference of character between the two peoples. Broadly speaking, the Walloon character differs little from the French, while the Flemish approaches more closely to the Dutch. In cottages of the Walloon district I noticed the quick sense of adjustment, the eagerness to meet the visitor's standard, the neatness and reserve that one would find in a good French cottage. When, on one occasion, I entered a Flemish cottage, with a Flemish priest, the man, woman, and grown daughter came in unceremoniously, with a broad laugh and rough greeting, put several slabs of fat bacon in a not very clean frying-pan over the stove, and insisted on our taking some of these unattractive messes with our coffee. The distinction was not obliterated at the other end of the cultural scale. Of two professors with whom I made a close acquaintance one, Mgr. (now Cardinal) Mercier, was an admirable type of Walloon gentleman : subtle, refined, exquisitely attentive to my own standard of fitness, courteous and helpful to the last degree. The other professor was a Fleming, a young and learned man, most kindly and helpful ;

yet blunt, unconventional, rough of speech, careless of manners.

The Flemings have deteriorated under the Spanish rule. It is hardly necessary to recall that the age of exquisite art and brightly-coloured dress, which in some respects we envy, was also an age of rough manners and considerable license and gross ignorance. Wherever a foreign despotism has tended to check the advance of a people beyond this medieval stage, as the Spanish rule tended to do in Belgium, we must make allowance. We are too apt to compare one racial type with another and to forget that, while all the peoples of Europe began at a common level of medieval coarseness, political conditions have in some cases quickened, and in other cases retarded, the modern advance. Hence, while the Flemish character substantially resembles the Dutch, it is in some respects less attractive. During the hundred years when the Dutch were joyously devoting their energy to the aggrandisement of their new kingdom and laying the foundations of a very solid and characteristic culture, the Flemish peasants were depressed by an alien government and restricted in their interest to the laborious round of the year's task. In little towns like St. Trond one still sees features of public life —I do not speak of morality in the technical sense : the Flemings are generally admirable in that respect —which are incredibly medieval. In the villages I have known the chief event of a fête to be a coffee-

drinking match for the women, at which more than one woman has fatally injured herself. Yet the superb art and noble sentiments of a Maurice Maeterlinck mark the high limit of the recent advance of the Flemings. Mr. G. K. Chesterton has somewhere classed Maeterlinck as a "decadent." He is, on the contrary, a very healthy Fleming : fond of beer, and dogs, and prize-fights, but an exquisite artist and a man of lofty moral standards.

These two fundamental types of Belgian character are, of course, divided into a number of regional varieties. The Walloon of the industrial districts differs from the rural type almost as much as the Birmingham artisan differs from the Somerset farmer. In the mining district south of Mons one finds a different and less attractive type of worker. Decades of degradingly hard labour and hard drinking and carefully fostered ignorance, under a selfish and unenlightened industrial system, have lowered the character of the population : as similar conditions lowered the character of the British population in the early part of the nineteenth century. A growing interest in at least his own political and economic status is of late years improving the condition of the miner. In the less favourable country of Liège and in the mountainous regions and forests of Belgian Luxemburg, in the provinces of Hainault and Brabant where the peasants still work the lands of rich owners, and in the provinces of East and

West Flanders where there is considerable peasant-proprietorship, one finds corresponding differences of character. Everywhere one finds a laborious, thrifty, and cheerful peasantry.

One's first impression in passing through the country is that women and dogs do all the work, and no doubt the need to maintain an army is a heavy drain on the manhood of so small a country. But the men are industrious, and it is the poverty of resources, the need to exact the last ounce of produce from their little plot, which compels the women to share the labour of the field as well as do the work of the home. The great bulk of the peasantry have a very slender income. Bread and soup and large quantities of their own green vegetables are their chief diet. They rarely see "butcher's meat." Age after age the great plains, often divided into small plots, have been worked with ant-like industry during the spring and summer to sustain the crowded agricultural population. In Brabant (which includes Brussels, but no other large town) there is a population of 1077 to the square mile : in East Flanders 931 to the square mile. The entire country is less than half the size of Ireland, yet sustains a rapidly growing population of seven and a half millions. Its old prosperity has been blighted by the Spaniard, and the industry of its people was just raising it once more to a position of promise. But there was no economic margin to meet a grave catastrophe, and the wanton

devastation of the country by Germany is one of the foulest outrages on modern civilisation.

Will the spirit of its people issue unbroken from this appalling catastrophe and prove strong enough to accomplish the task of reconstruction? That spirit has sustained two terrible trials. The first was when the passage of the German troops was honourably resisted, and the barbaric policy of reprisals and terrifying was initiated. The inevitable havoc of war was expected, and, no doubt, the Belgian people believed, as most people believed, that France and England were in a position to offer serious and effective resistance to the German advance before the whole of Belgium could be overrun. In the summer of 1913 M. Jules Cambon had warned his Government from Berlin that war was rapidly approaching. When the Allied forces, nevertheless, proved miserably inadequate to meet the expected German tide, and town after town was savagely wrecked by the invaders, the Belgians did not hesitate. In scattered and utterly ruined bands, heart-broken over the children that were lost or the aged who were left behind or the home they would never see intact again, they fled to Holland, England, and France. I fancy that more than one people of Europe would have bowed to the ruthless invader and purchased their homes by submission. The Belgians were united with their King in refusing to submit. A "peace-party" arose in England, but one does not hear of such

a movement among the Belgians. I have in mind still a man who was conspicuous for cheerfulness amongst a cheerful gathering on the *Baltic* in November : he was, I learned, a Flemish diamond-merchant, entirely ruined by the war, going to start a new life in the United States.

The second period of trial was the dreary winter and spring when the expected forces of England and France still failed to appear, and grim messages came daily from those who watched on the Dutch frontier. Probably no man will ever know the full horrors that have been poured upon that unfortunate country. A soldier told me that on one occasion during the winter a German detachment advanced against them, pressing before their line a row of the aged Belgians who had been left behind. Our soldiers hesitated as the line of pitiful figures came nearer, until the officer in charge said : "Put an end to their sufferings." They shot straight, and half a dozen more Belgians were added to the horrid list : killed by Englishmen, the Germans will say. Some day the gaps in the population of Belgium will be counted, and those among us who think it unbrotherly to waste time in "idle recrimination" will shudder.

The third and great trial will be when the nation re-assembles on its soil and is dispersed to the ruins that once were homes. We have not heard of any "Hymn of Hate" among the Belgian refugees, but the Belgians will be more, or less,

than human if they contemplate with serenity that blackened stretch of desolation from Liège to Ypres. If I know the people, they will apply themselves to the work of restoration with the same quiet energy and doggedness with which they bore their heavy economic burden before the war and have borne their terrible burden of suffering during the last six months. English people observe to each other that they are not impressed by close acquaintance with these "heroic Belgians." Our journals, no doubt, had raised an expectation of singular distinction, and one finds that they are not always as cleanly in their habits as the English, not always resigned to their condition, not universally sober. The fact remains that they have given a massive example of that spirit which the world seems to need. They have fought and endured for the sanctity of a plighted word, and no nation can contribute a finer element to modern civilisation.

More than two thousand years ago a little people returned, when its enemy had retired, to contemplate the ashes of its former homes. From those ashes arose the most famous and most beautiful city of all history, the Athens of Pheidias and Pericles, built by the whole-hearted devotion of its men, women, and children. Belgium has no Pheidias and no Pericles, but it has an opportunity of concentrating its energy upon a constructive work which may secure for it even greater prestige than it has won. We should do ill to expect too much.

The twentieth century is not the fifth century before Christ. Deep religious and political dissensions distract the energy of any modern commonwealth, and those political truces which we affect in times of crisis are hollow and temporary. The very task of restoration will soon bring into prominence those sectarian differences which impede all constructive work, yet are an inevitable preparation for the final and lasting construction.

Belgium is more deeply divided in this regard than is generally believed. The establishment of the Kingdom in 1831 was, as was natural in that last period of illiteracy, secured by the middle-class, who were mainly an anti-clerical body. For nearly fifty years the Liberals retained power, but the retention of power by their clerical rivals since 1884 until our own time has given this generation the impression that the country is overwhelmingly Roman Catholic. I notice, in fact, that even the latest edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* says that, apart from 60,000 Protestants (who are mostly English), the people are all Roman Catholics. In point of fact, the population is almost equally divided into clericals and anti-clericals, and the latter show a constantly increasing vote. The numbers of the Chambre during the last Parliament were 101 Catholics, 44 Liberals, 39 Social Democrats, and 2 Christian Socialists : or 103 clericals and 83 anti-clericals. But the expression of the country's feeling has long been falsified, in spite of

manhood suffrage (since 1894), by an elaborate system of plural voting which hampers the Socialists. There are 1,745,666 electors in Belgium, but they are entitled to cast nearly two and a half million votes. Of late years, moreover, many of the Liberals have, for economic reasons, voted for a clerical candidate, or abstained from voting, when the alternative was to support a Socialist candidate.

Thus the country is probably more evenly divided than any in Europe, and it is an entire mistake to imagine that the great mass of the people are not interested in the issues of modern life and thought. The independent character of the Belgians has compensated for the low standard of culture, and what are called advanced opinions have made progress only second to that they have made in France. No doubt these differences will be suspended as far as possible in the work of restoration, though it seems hardly likely that the Church will, after the appalling destruction of its property, recover the full extent of its influence. If the victorious Powers make it their first and plainest duty to secure a full indemnity for Belgium, we shall probably see as excellent an example of reconstruction as we have seen of resisting destruction.

The spirit of Belgium has something of the character of the spirit of Switzerland, where three peoples speaking different tongues have been perfectly blended into one. Ticino to-day would probably resist heroically any effort of Italy to

appropriate it, just as Vaux or Aargau would resist the invitation of France or Germany to return to "the parent-race." Community of blood is more important in the schemes of politicians than in the life of peoples. We have created the national spirit of Belgium by carving for them some 12,000 square miles out of the map of Europe and entrusting it to their vigour and their honour. They have not the natural advantages of the Swiss, nor the same long and bracing experience of democratic institutions. Their royalty was set up on the debased model of Europe in the thirties, and the last half century has been filled with political struggle. They have not even the inspiration of an earlier nationalist history to impel them. The word Belgium had never meant more than a vague and ill-defined region until it was adopted and defined in 1831. But the Belgians have shown that the gift of independence was fitly granted to them, and the world will watch with true and generous sympathy the arduous restoration of their prosperity.

CHAPTER VIII

THE UNITY OF ITALY

Reasons for the intervention of Italy—Creation of the Italian people—A nation, not a race—Early mixture of races—Unity under Rome—Chaos of the Middle Ages—Rise of the Papal Power, the Communes, and the Republics—Evil influence of foreign dominion—The progressive north and the unprogressive south—Political rather than climatic causes—The contrast of Milan, Rome, and Naples—Of Tuscany and the Abruzzi—Gabriele d'Annunzio—Great variety of character—The unification of Italy—The final expulsion of the Austrian.

IN an early month of the great war I chanced to be the guest of a highly cultivated and humanely disposed American : one of the finer type of men that New York is contributing to the saner idealism of modern times. He frequently expressed impatience at the tardiness of Italy to engage in the struggle until, one morning, I chilled his expectation with the question : “On what moral ground can Italy take action ?” It would be ingenuous to deny that large numbers of people who have severely condemned Germany’s lust of territory have, at the same time, urged Italy to take her part in the conflict solely that she might regain the fragments of Italian territory which Austria still retained ; nor can it be doubted that one of the chief motives in the mind of those Italian statesmen who have advocated intervention was the determination to

obtain, at the expense of Austria, a larger control over the shores and waters of the Adriatic. Germans and Austrians not unnaturally express warm indignation at this issue. As a member of the Triple Alliance Italy was, of course, under no obligation whatever to render aid to Austria and Germany in a plainly aggressive war, and the popular charge of "treachery" is wholly unjustified. She had a perfect right to come to a decision in regard to this war without thought of a Treaty which had no bearing on it. Probably for twenty years, certainly for more than ten years, German statesmen and soldiers have known that Italy could assuredly not be relied upon to give any aid beyond the letter of her obligation. But to many it must seem as if the conscience of Italy had displayed at least some indelicacy in repudiating a contract on the eve of attacking the contracting parties, and in basing this violent change of attitude upon a territorial ambition.

The complete vindication of Italy's action must be postponed until, on a later page, we have examined the historical facts which have influenced it, but a few words of explanation may at once be given. We shall see that Italy entered the Triple Alliance under the stress of fears which have long disappeared. In entering this Alliance she made a grave sacrifice. Fragments of old Italian territory were still grasped tenaciously and unjustly in the claws of the Austrian eagle, and large numbers of Italians looked to their motherland to free them

from the last shade of that Austrian dominion which had once overshadowed and deeply injured the north of Italy. The liberation of the Italian people from foreign yoke was not complete—the work of Cavour and Garibaldi was not entirely accomplished—as long as those provinces remained under Austria. The position of Italy was therefore as singular and painful as would have been the position of France if, in the period of friction with England at the end of the nineteenth century, she had been forced to ally herself with Germany while Alsace and Lorraine remained under the German flag. This situation always put a peculiar complexion on the *Triplex*: it was a matter of narrow expediency, not a cordial association of peoples. There was, therefore, no ordinary irregularity, certainly no treachery or unexpected hostility, in Italy's repudiation of the Alliance. But when we take a larger view of the situation, we are compelled to admit that Italy's conduct was not only free from irregularity, but entirely just and proper, in converting a nominal and obsolete alliance into an attitude of hostility.

These broader moral grounds which exonerate the action of Italy from any shade of censure need no elaboration. Writing in the *Giornale d'Italia* some time ago, I urged Italy, not merely to complete the unity of her people, but to have the pride to dissociate herself from the *inimici humani generis* and help civilisation to ward off the menace that confronted it. Italy contracted with Germany and

Austria that she would help to defend them against an unjust aggressor. It is absurd to suggest that, when they themselves become brutally aggressive, there is any shade of fine sentiment which should have moved Italy to follow their action with sympathy. And when this primitive aggression, finding itself baulked of its aim and threatened with severe punishment, enters upon a career of savagery such as Germany has initiated, even neutrality becomes impossible. The horrible revelation of the temper of German and Austrian militarism justifies any Power in Europe in taking the field on behalf of civilisation, and has fitly removed the last trace of hesitation on Italy's part. Had this war been virtually forced on her old associates, and had they fought with clean weapons and at least an elementary chivalry, we might have been tempted to judge harshly Italy's intervention. As it is, her desire to bring the last remnants of her people under her flag could not have found a finer consecration or a more congenial opportunity. She fights, it is true, for herself : but she fights also for the nations with which she is more intimately allied—France and England—and for the highest ideals of the modern spirit.

Italy we regard as the "Latin" nation in the most literal acceptance of that loose epithet, but a short consideration of the original peopling of the Peninsula and their later history will warn us not to imagine a "Latin soul" flaming in racial anta-

gonism against its ancient enemies of the north. We have here, in fact, one of the most singular illustrations of the way in which geographical and historical accidents lead an assemblage of peoples to gather round a common flag and constitute a nationality with a fierce corporate consciousness. The fragments of Italian soil which are to be recovered in this struggle are part of the territory of the Republic of Venice, and, at the time when Venice thus extended her sway over them, there was no Italian people. The men of Rome and Naples had as little consciousness of fellowship with the Venetians—had, in fact, as fiery a hostility to them—as Frenchmen had in regard to Germans or British. It is no call of the blood that has united them under the green, white, and red flag of Victor Emmanuel, and the making of the nation finely illustrates those principles which, throughout this work, I have been opposing to popular racial psychology.

The original inhabitants of Italy are still very dim even to the penetrating eye of modern ethnology. We glimpse a remote age when the tongue of land (Italy and Sicily) completely crossed the Mediterranean, and formed a bridge by which African peoples passed to Europe. We can tell more confidently of a later period—probably about 1000 B.C.—when a strange and progressive people, whom we know as the Etruscans, settled in the north, elaborated a very promising civilisation, and ex-

tended their rule as far as Rome, on whose early development they had great influence. It was the tradition of these Etruscans that they came from Lydia, one of the early centres of civilisation in Asia Minor, and science has found no reason to doubt the tradition. They found the land already peopled with a variety of tribes who probably represented an early wave of what we call the Indo-European race, and they partly displaced and very largely mingled with these older settlers. It seems to have been only one small tribe, living in the south of the Peninsula, which at first bore the name of *Itali*—possibly meaning “calf-breeders”—and it is unnecessary here to give the learned names of these fragments of an obscure early people. By the middle of the millennium before Christ the land bore an extensive Etruscan (Asiatic) civilisation, surrounded by a score of less advanced peoples of disputed origin. We might unite them broadly as fragments of Professor Sergi's “Mediterranean race”—the short, swarthy, black-haired people of southern Europe; but, besides the large and spreading Etruscan civilisation, there were considerable invasions of Ligurians, Celts, and Gauls. The fertile plains of Italy were attractive, and the inhabitants mingled the blood of several races. In the south the Greeks settled and contributed largely to the variety, as the remains of their stately temples remind the traveller to-day.

It was probably in the seventh century before

Christ that Rome, the modest centre of one of these older tribes, began to gather strength at the expense of its neighbours. The early history of Rome is legendary, and no doubt we should find, if the circumstances of the time were better known to us, that it was no quality of blood, but a conjunction of favouring conditions, which enabled the early Romans to make some progress. Modern scholars are disposed to regard them as a composite people. The "Latins," or the inhabitants of the great plain of Latium, seem to have been overpowered by the Sabines of a more northern district, and these Sabines seem to have provided the vigorous patrician caste. However that may be, the development of Rome followed the familiar course. "To him that hath shall be given" is as fundamental a principle in the making of nations as in the making of stars. Given a preliminary advantage, the slightly stronger tribe increases like the rolling snowball. The Roman troops carried their arms against the Celts and Etruscans of the north, and the Etruscan culture enkindled a culture in the city of the seven hills. By the second century of the old era the Romans had dominated all the peoples of the Peninsula, and the dialect of Latium, or the Latin language, was displacing all others. The extreme north of what we call Italy was regarded by the Romans as an alien land, and called "Cisalpine Gaul," even in the days of Cæsar. But the first Emperor, Octavian, included it definitely in "Italy" and extended the Roman

organisation over it. Such, in very brief terms, was the first making of the Italian people : a mixture of Gauls, Celts, Etruscans, Greeks, Latins, and more obscure tribes, now united by a common tongue and a common civilisation.

I must refrain here from even glancing at the later story of Rome's prosperity. It is enough to make clear the way in which political domination welded a large number of peoples, which happened to be confined by very definite geographical frontiers, into a single nationality. Only in this sense can we speak of "Italian blood" or an Italian race. The very language imposed on them was not the language of the old Itali, or Oenotrians, and the "Latins" themselves were soon absorbed in the general mass or sacrificed on the battle-fields of the world. Moreover, there were throughout the imperial period constant and large accessions of foreign blood to the constituted nationality. Rome itself, a city of a million people in its prime, was a centre of international fusion. Long before the Empire was founded the blood of its citizens was heavily adulterated. The practices of slavery and concubinage led even the patricians to beget a mixed race whose mothers were of all the peoples embraced in the Empire, from Syria to Albion. Even long after the old pagan religion had departed, the moral sentiment was not opposed to intercourse with slaves. A fifth-century Christian writer, Paulinus of Pella, remarks in his autobiographical poem ("Eucha-

risticos ") that he led a chaste life and was " content with the use of the slaves of his household." From the second century of the old era onward Syrian, Greek, Gallic, Spanish, and other women were, in large numbers, contributing to the life of Rome.

On the other hand, as I remarked incidentally on an earlier page, the Roman and Latin stocks were disappearing on the battle-fields or in distant colonies. The Roman patrician and the Roman legionary were rather the product of experience than instances of some mystic and innate " genius " for administration and military work. Four centuries of aggressive war and enlightened administration created a high type of character for its purposes, and the wide adoption of the Stoic philosophy at the beginning of the Christian era was quickly moderating its defects. This old Roman character, however, did not survive in the history of Italy, and must not be sought in any corner of modern Italy. For a time the Roman citizens proudly regarded themselves as a separate and privileged caste, dominating the hundred million folk who peopled the Empire. But they were dying out, and in the first century of the Christian era the class had to be enlarged to admit the whole of Italy. At a later date the class was still further enlarged, and the " Roman people " became a cosmopolitan mass of the most complicated racial description. The only unity was still the geographical and political unity.

In the fifth century the political unity was

destroyed, and from that time until the nineteenth century an "Italian people" existed only in the sense that all the peoples contained in that definite area of land south of the Alps, sharply defined by the shores of the Mediterranean, spoke a more or less common language. Its racial ingredients became more complicated in each century. When the Goths of the fifth century had retired, the Ostrogoths (Teutons) settled in the north and spread a very promising civilisation over the still warm ruins of the old Empire. The Popes then invited the Byzantine or Greek Emperors to expel them, and for two centuries a Greek or Græco-Syrian element was infused into the people. Next the Lombards came from the Teutonic north and settled on the plains which bear their name to-day ; and from there they extended their rule and mingled with the inhabitants as far as central Italy. The Popes, who had by this time acquired very large tracts of territory in the disordered Peninsula, invited the Franks to curb or expel the Lombards, and Charlemagne created a new Italian State (covering two-thirds of the Peninsula) under the sovereignty of Rome. But an ecclesiastical polity of that character had peculiar weaknesses. It imposed no definite secular culture—it had no schools or lay lawyers or elaborate civic administration—and, as it would not use its resources for adequate military defence, it continually invited foreign Powers to come and expel those who molested it

or to coerce its rebellious vassals. Italy therefore became, under the banner of St. Peter, a constant battle-field, and foreign armies of every nation trod its soil and mingled with its inhabitants. The Saracens formed large settlements in the south ; the Germans, later the French, and still later the Spanish, dominated its provinces and contributed to its population ; and hosts of irregulars or mercenaries — Hungarians, Swiss, English, Normans, etc.—added at one or other period to the confusion.

The re-birth of culture and civic life in the thirteenth century inspired a new Italian consciousness, and from this there gradually issued the famous republics and principalities of the Middle Ages. There was, however, no common race-consciousness, and the new States wore themselves out in bitter hostility and warfare. There were not wanting men who, like Dante, sighed for Italian unity, but the alternatives were a foreign ruler or the Pope, and the various republics and principalities were naturally opposed to both. So medieval Italy, whose splendid spirit rose to such high artistic achievement, wore itself out, and the foreigner once more dominated and defiled the land. Austria spread over the north and Spain over the south, with interludes of French invasion, according to the national sentiments or political schemes of the various Popes. The energy of Napoleon disturbed for a time this corrupt and demoralising system, and might have

issued in the formation of a united and progressive Italy. But the old state of things was restored after Waterloo. Austria dominated and debased the northern provinces : Naples (a Spanish dynasty) even further degraded the southern provinces : and the feeble and unenlightened rule of the Popes held central Italy in a condition of profound ignorance and disorder. In the early part of the nineteenth century brigandage was as rife in the Papal States as in the Balkan mountains, and illiteracy was almost as general. But by this time the Kings of Sardinia had found a footing in the north, and from Turin they were extending a more enlightened rule which promised a new era to Italy. They introduced a school-system into Piedmont, and the oppressed provinces turned their eyes toward the flag of Sardinia. Then came the age of Cavour and Garibaldi and Victor Emmanuel II, and the occupation of Rome in 1870 crowned their labours for the emancipation of Italy and the formation of an Italian nation.

I have traversed this long and profoundly interesting stretch of history only in order to explain the diversities which one notices in the Italian character to-day. As in the case of Germany, one finds a broad and clear distinction between the northern and the southern character, and the distinction is of a similar nature : there is more energy of will and intellect in the north. But it is a mistake to regard this distinction as due solely or mainly to

a difference of climate. One thinks of the Neapolitan or Calabrian as a man seduced by nature to lie in the sun and let the rich soil bring forth the little nourishment he needs : of the man of Milan or Turin as invigorated by the Alpine breezes and equally impelled by nature to activity and enterprise. We shall see presently that large allowance must be made for climate in Italy, but this climatic psychology, as one may call it, is in the main a piece of superficial nonsense. The fact that the work of civilisation was conducted for thousands of years in a latitude far south of Europe, and that the more vigorous nations of the north of Europe were the last to be civilised, ought to impose a check on these superficial speculations. Vigour and enterprise were not wanting in ancient Egypt, which maintained its civilisation for eight thousand years, or in Assyria or Persia. The Arabs and the Moors had no greater opportunity of founding a great polity and culture than the European nations of the early Middle Ages, yet they signally outstripped the northern peoples. In fine, the fact that the north Italian type of to-day—the vigorous, enterprising, orderly, ambitious, organising type—was two thousand years ago peculiar to Rome, and not developed in the north, is not without significance. Cultural contact or environment is more important than climate.

It is the same with what we call morality in the narrower meaning of the word. One reads that in

the north of Italy the illiterates (over the age of six) are 11.0 per cent. of the population : in the south of Italy (Calabria) 69.6 per cent. : and that the proportion of illegitimate births corresponds with this difference. The "southern sun" is at once made responsible for the difference, and the supposed laxity and laziness of the southerner are condoned. Such speculations are as inaccurate as they are superficial. Morality does not change with distance from the equator. Ancient Egypt and Babylonia were in this respect much like modern European peoples ; and in the various phases of moral development of any particular nation one clearly traces changes of cultural influence while the climate remains the same. The vice of southern Italy is, no doubt, closely connected with its illiteracy, but they have a common root in those centuries of corrupt misgovernment which detained southern Italy in a medieval condition until the arrival of Garibaldi. The southerner is an excellent worker. I have watched the thousands of men who have been drafted into the modern industrial system in the docks of Naples, and they compare well with the men I have seen working in Melbourne or Sydney, even in Liverpool and New York. Nor are the agricultural workers of the south as lazy as they are generally supposed to be, to say nothing of the fishers and boatmen. It is true that the moral attitude on sex relations differs materially from that of the north, but we have to conceive this as a

lingering of medieval conditions, especially favoured by the immorality of their clergy. In fact, the prevalence of vice, especially unnatural vice, round the Bay of Naples is artificially fostered by foreigners, who in great numbers resort there precisely because of the license which they would not find, and often hypocritically condemn, in their own countries. The revelations, which preceded and followed the suicide of F. A. Krupp in 1902, in regard to his holidays in Capri, caused many Germans to regard that southern region as a new Gomorra ; though more informed Germans knew that Berlin itself was almost equally entitled to that lurid name.

The difference between north and south is not so much one of native sturdiness as of political history. Piedmont was one of the first countries of Europe to adopt a scheme of general education, just as Prussia was the first State of Germany ; and it was contact with Piedmont and a bracing struggle against the corrupt Austrian despotism which extended the new spirit to Milan, Florence, Venice, and most of the northern cities. Naples itself is in course of transformation from the condition to which its old rulers had degraded it, and the visitor who approaches it to-day with the traditional idea of its supineness and idle gaiety will be surprised by its actual features. An Italian character is being created for the first time since the decay of imperial Rome : a definite social and political culture is being impressed upon the entire people. But the

degree of illiteracy is still enormous in the south, and the cultural transformation is bound to be slow. The compulsory military service is assisting in the work, as soldiers are always transferred for the period of service to a distant region.

It need hardly be said, however, that the Italian character will always present considerable local variations, and climate and geographical position count very largely in these. The reader of Gabriele d'Annunzio's superb, if painful, romance *Il Trionfo della Morte* will have learned with some surprise that there exists in the heart of Italy a population which is entirely medieval in its impotence and superstition. The appalling listlessness, the unchecked ravages of disease, the charms and fanatical processions, the childish outlook on life, the low mental and moral level, which D'Annunzio so vividly describes, bring before us the worst features of that phase of civilisation from which Europe at large has emerged. It is the region of the Abruzzi, the highest part of the Apennines, where a million and a half people are scattered over a wild and mountainous region which, except in its more genial fringes and valleys, obstinately resists the inflow of civilisation. Its people are mainly devoted to rearing cattle and pigs—are, in fact, famous in Italy for their hams and sausages—but the stirring events of recent Italian history have had no effective echo in their mountains. I have no doubt that some day the ethnologist will discover, from fragments of

their dialect or measurements of their skulls, that in those mountains one of the aboriginal tribes found refuge from the invaders of Italy, and some may see in this an explanation of their "impenetrability to culture." It is really more enlightening to connect their character with their environment, which approaches that of Russia. During the long winter the villages are sometimes isolated from each other by months of snow, and the climate is so rigorous that snow may fall in the middle of summer. Such a climate might be bracing to a people with fair cultural development, but it merely adds to the misery of the people of the Abruzzi and makes more difficult that interchange of ideas or imposition of culture on which progress depends.

Similar variations of character, due to geographical or climatic conditions, will be found in other parts of Italy. Other variations are due to differences of ideals. The cities of the north have been captured by Socialism, and their advancing workers contrast with the agricultural population, which is still largely Catholic, more than the two types are usually contrasted. Among the middle class, again, there are considerable variations. Gabriele d'Annunzio, whose fervent advocacy of intervention has secured for him more consideration than his splendid art had done, really represents a relatively small class. He has somewhere described himself (in the person of one of his characters) as "a princely artist of magnificent sensuality." Those who have only

a superficial acquaintance with his work will have been not a little surprised at the virility with which he has fired the nation to patriotic action. He is usually classed as a "decadent" of the most pronounced type, and associated with Maupassant. In reality he stands for a very definite Epicurean view of life, and he has a large following among the Italian middle class. Opposed to his school are the various shades of Stoicism in modern thought, and the Modernists who advocate a liberalised version of the old faith. Among the middle class and the artisans, however, the Catholic Church has lost its influence, and the situation is rapidly approaching that which has been established in France.

If we may speak at all of a national character in Italy, we should describe it as nearer to the French than that of any other nation ; and this character is extending southward. A Neapolitan professor lately assured me that the Modernist revolt is spreading there more rapidly than in England or Germany. With the merits or demerits of that dispute I am, of course, not concerned here, but the fact must surprise those who imagined that the south Italians were, from some mysticism or indolence of nature, not interested in ideas, and particularly averse from "advanced" ideas. They simply illustrate once more the essential plasticity of human nature and the power of cultural environment. In Rome itself the character is, as I have previously noted, extremely varied. The two drastically opposed cul-

tures—that of the Church and that of the State—engender their own definite types, and there are between them every shade of liberal or diplomatic cleric on the one hand and liberally religious politician on the other.

Broadly speaking, the Church and its followers stand outside the national unity which is now concentrated on the work of restoring the old fragments of Venice to the motherland. Benedict XV, an able and enlightened pontiff, has inaugurated his career, which will prove of very great importance to his Church, with a blunder. It was foreseen that he, a former colleague of Rampolla, would restore Papal policy to the lines laid down by Leo XIII, and obliterate as far as possible the disastrous effect of the rule of Pius X. He seems, however, not to have realised that the diplomacy of Leo XIII was not nearly so successful as is generally believed, and he confronted the European situation with diplomacy when firmness and candour were needed. One realises the grave difficulties which influenced him. The religious development of Europe has disposed the Vatican to give every consideration to the interests of its followers in Austria and Germany, and the Pope would have incurred a grave risk in condemning the action of those nations. If, moreover, they fail in their enterprise—which to Benedict XV might seem an open issue—a large population of Roman Catholics would be withdrawn from their allegiance and put under what the

Vatican regards as the perverse influence of France and Russia. On these grounds the Pope was silent, if he did not actually use what influence he possessed to restrain Italy from taking action. His action has further alienated the Italian people. They are to-day convinced that their interest lies in intervention, and they look with some disdain on the spiritual power which claims a moral government of the world yet dare not utter a syllable of condemnation of the most appalling outrage of modern times.

Italy now advances toward the completion of its unity and to a new association with the more pacific and more enlightened peoples of Europe. When, in 1882, it entered the Triple Alliance, it was inspired by a deep distrust of France and a regard for the strong support of Germany. Bismarck had promoted the interest of Germany by urging or encouraging France to enter upon colonial developments in north Africa, and in this Italy saw a menace to its own interests in Tripoli. There was, moreover, a strong feeling that France was still a Catholic Power and might yet be induced by the Vatican to attempt to restore the Papal States. Germany, on the other hand, was profoundly opposed to both France and the Vatican. In the circumstances both Crispi and Bismarck worked for the alliance. That it also meant an alliance with Austria was for Italy only a regrettable accident. When, as time went on, France and Italy came to a friendly understand-

ing in regard to Africa, when France broke the last link that bound it to the Vatican and became wholly indifferent to the Pope's claim of temporal power, when England (always a friend of Italy) moved away from Germany and approached closer to France, the position of Italy was entirely altered. She now discovered how vitally her interests conflicted with those of Germany's allies—Austria and Turkey—and her secession from the Triple Alliance was only a matter of time.

The Italian claim which is the more material base of its present action is, broadly, that Austria did not entirely quit Italy in the nineteenth century, and that Italian-peopled districts which were at one time part of the territory of Venice shall now, as they wish, pass under the Italian flag. As far as the Trentino is concerned, her title is indisputable. A triangle of obviously Italian territory was retained by Austria for strategical reasons, and a glance at the map will suffice to show that it is far more important to Italy, for the purpose of legitimate defence, to recover this territory. The cruel measures taken by Austria as soon as war became imminent sufficiently reveal the sentiments of the inhabitants. They are Italian, and the world will applaud their restoration to the political and social system to which they naturally belong.

It is probable, however, that Italy will attach more material importance to the recovery of Trieste and a considerable share of the coast on the east of

the Adriatic. The sentimental basis of the claim once more is the former extension of the Republic of Venice, and the material basis is the need of greater security in the Adriatic. Mr. Arnold Toynbee would refuse Italy the possession of Trieste, and German and Austrian writers have fostered the opinion in European literature that it is "a thoroughly German city." It is, in fact, the city which Germany has in mind as a southern port when she will—or would—have absorbed Austria. But, in spite of all the efforts of Austrians and Germans, the population of Trieste is still Italian to the extent of 74 per cent., and the Italians will present a very weighty claim when the time comes for the re-settlement of the map. In regard to the province of Istria the Austrians will probably point out that only 33 per cent. of the population are Italian while 66 per cent. are Slav, but some account must be taken of the exertions of Austria to discourage and reduce the Italian population. The coast population is still almost entirely Italian, and there might be a rearrangement of frontier in the interior. The gravest problem will be raised by the desire of Italy to creep still further down the eastern coast of the Adriatic. She has few good ports on the western side, and she plausibly claims that a successful war will give her the right to strengthen her position in the Adriatic. Since these southern Slav regions will probably pass definitively from Austria after the war, the issue will lie between

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Italy and the Slavs. There seems to be sufficient coast, even of a favourable character, to meet the legitimate aspirations of all. We may trust that Italy will generously consent to the approach of Serbia—which will in no sense be a naval rival—to the sea. If a settlement be devised that fairly meets each nation's economic needs and political memories, there can be no doubt that the impulse given to Italy by this final struggle for unity will strengthen and exalt her national life. Above all, her definite association with England and France in a great cause is a matter of warm congratulation.

CHAPTER IX

RACIAL AND NATIONAL CHARACTER

Libel and mischief of racial epithets—Need to determine the full character of nations—Racial strains not important—The character of nations made chiefly by environment—Origin of the civilization of Europe—Isolation as a cause of backwardness—Russia, Spain, and Ireland—Economic influences on character—Political influences—Study of Italian character—Tendency to uniformity—Probable effects of the war—Partition of Germany and Austria—Faint prospect of lasting peace—Travail of the soul of Europe.

THE direct aim which I have had in view in the preceding chapters was to determine as accurately as possible the characters of the peoples of Europe who are involved in the present unhappy struggle. It is especially in time of war that a nation invents or adopts those epigrammatic libels of its neighbours which, precisely because of their brevity and their consonance with the emotions of the hour, work incalculable mischief. For some years to come, it is to be feared, the Englishman will be content with a single simple formula, “the brutal Hun,” as an expression of that complex issue of traditions, impulses, and interests which we have recognised as the soul of Germany. On the German side the worn tags—the perfidious Englishman, the decadent Frenchman, and the barbaric Slav—will be regarded more confidently than ever as descriptive of what is most

characteristic in the victorious peoples. Austria alone, by some strange chance, has eluded the phrase-maker. The injury which these labels are apt to perpetrate in the life of Europe is so obvious that I need not enlarge on it, and I trust that this more patient and balanced consideration of the characters of the various races, in normal as well as abnormal circumstances, may assist in restricting the mischief.

The second and more important aim was to make intelligible the mental or moral diversities of the different peoples, and, in some measure, the degeneration of normally excellent characters in time of war or other disturbing influence. Few writers in England have more sincerely appreciated than I the good qualities and the triumphs of the German people, and few now are more conscious of the brutality that the German troops have perpetrated or more pained by the acquiescence of the nation in those outrages. I have endeavoured to show that such brutality is not a normal trait even of the Prussian or the Bavarian peasants who have dishonoured their country on the field of battle : and that a patient and industrious inquiry enables us to trace the phases and influences of development which have led to this lamentable depression in the history of a great people. We have followed a similar development in the case of Austria, and have sufficiently investigated the historical conditions and processes which give us a humane understanding

of the comparative backwardness of the Russian, the Turkish, and the Balkan peoples.

Throughout the work I have had in mind a few leading principles of interpretation which years of historical and scientific study have recommended to me. The technical formulæ of what is called social psychology have been rarely used in the course of the work. I have discovered little aid in them for my particular purpose, and have found it more profitable to use what may be called, in a very broad sense, the biological method.

The first advantage of the biological view of peoples is that one readily perceives their common capacities and instinctively looks for the external circumstances which have enlarged one capacity in one people and another in its neighbour, or have checked the development of a nation's higher powers as a whole and, in places, led to an accentuation of the cruder virtues of a low social order. The Albanian, for instance, seems to regard slaying as a virile achievement, yet if even a potential enemy approaches under the recognised code or symbol of peace, he will scrupulously refrain from violence and may be hospitable; and the history and surroundings of the Albanian illumine his development. The Russian Slav seems apathetic and ill-regulated in his impulses, yet a change in his intellectual environment—an acceptance of a particular social or religious creed—transforms him in a few years into a fiery apostle or a model of disciplined virtue.

The Jew may seem by some force of nature excluded from the world of ideas and directed solely to commerce ; yet when, as in Russia and Austria, he is admitted to the universities, he wins a remarkable distinction. We have seen in the course of the work the infinite activity of environment, past or present, in shaping the psychic material. Sometimes the formative influence may lie in a remote period of history, and we have been compelled constantly to glance over earlier ages. Your cat, going to sleep before the fire, makes mysterious revolutions before it settles. It is repeating a ceremony which had a vital meaning ages ago : the laying of the long grass in the primitive jungle. The button which the tailor sews on the back of your coat seems a mystic thing until you recollect that your ancestor fastened his sword to it.

Hence the first and most useful conviction which one derives from this study of the characters of peoples is a conviction of the almost infinite plasticity of the souls of men. This may or may not be true of individuals. It is assuredly true of most peoples. There may be branches of the human family which have, in a very prolonged period of stagnation, lost their educability. If this is true of any, it is true only of a few of the lowest races of men, who do not call for consideration here. In all the cases we have considered, and in the case of the overwhelming majority of peoples, the human material is plastic and progressive. In every case where we have

found greater speed or greater tardiness in evolution we have found an historical or an economic reason for it.

This is the supreme truth which modern biology has vindicated and the sociologist may fearlessly and profitably apply. Let me give one biological illustration. There is a fish-type in biology, and there was originally a single type of fish. But in the course of countless ages and in a myriad of different environments the fish has assumed an enormous variety of forms. Some have left the water entirely and become land animals ; some live to-day equally well in water or on land. Some have penetrated into caverns where they have lost the use of their eyes : some have gone down into the dark abysses of the ocean and developed there, in their own bodies, an array of lamps which light up the depths. Some leap from the sea and plane, in a curved path, away from their pursuers : some are equipped with arms or armour which make flight superfluous. Tens of thousands of shapes and habits and devices have been extracted from the simple original material.

You cannot to-day transform a sun-fish into a dog-fish. The type of each was fixed millions of years ago. But the human material is still fresh, and every chapter of history confirms its plasticity. A group of the Ural-Altaic peoples, who seem so unprogressive, passes into the stimulating atmosphere of Europe and becomes the highly civilised Finns or Magyars. A group of Arabs accepts the

gospel of Mohammed, and in little more than a century it looks down in astonishment on its desert home from the pinnacle of one of the leading civilisations of Europe. I am not contending that environment is all-powerful, and the force of heredity a frail thing that it may control in a few decades. Where a certain human type has been selected during ages of evil government, the task of re-elevating the race or people will be correspondingly slow and difficult. But there is hardly a nation in the civilised world which does not record in its history some period of rapid degeneration or elevation under definite external influences.

Therefore we may discard as foolish and mischievous superstitions all the claims of particular races to innate superiority over others. It will be found in every case that a series of definitely assignable external circumstances have permitted or impelled certain races to advance more than others. Once it was the "Aryan" race that had some mystic superiority of stock. Now, when we observe what we call the degeneration or stagnation of the Persian and the Hindu, we confine the prestige to the white branch of the Aryan race ; some, in fact, regarding the "Latin" branches of the white race as outworn or decadent, restrict the superiority to the Slav or the Teuton. All these theories are as crude as the childlike interpretation of the Black in a primitive age : the myth of the curse of Ham. We trace without difficulty the series of geographical

circumstances and movements of population which made Europe the focus of civilisation during its modern development. These theories of race-superiority are nothing but superficial expressions of the fact that at a particular period of history a particular race or group of races holds the stage. Once it was the turn of the eastern Asiatics : then came the turn of the Mediterranean race : to-day it is the hour of the Nordic race : to-morrow, perhaps, the focus of civilisation will pass from Europe to Asia or to America, and even Africa may yet have its day. In the end, almost certainly, we shall have a uniform culture all over the earth.

The myth of the superiority of the Teuton is especially interesting because it overlooks a simple physical circumstance. Races, as I said on an earlier page, do not *grow* old and feeble : they enfeeble themselves by war and by the debilitating conditions and manifold diseases of civilised life. As long, therefore, as the race is to the strong, nations will seem to play their parts in the drama of history and then leave the stage to more vigorous actors. If we notice where civilisation began—on a stage bounded by the deserts of the south and the ocean and mountains of the east, but opening upon a genial world to the north-west—we find it entirely natural that each empire, as it decays, yields to a more northerly neighbour. The process has now reached the most northerly of all, the Teutonic peoples, and, in their hour of manhood and creative

strength, they are apt to flatter themselves that *their* destiny differs from that of all other races. So boasted each of the others in its hour of triumph. The conditions of life and survival are, however, being altered by the higher idealism of our age. The fittest to survive will cease to be the people with the greater physical vigour. The German, significantly enough, has had to restore, as far as he could, the medieval environment in order to secure his own triumph or survival.

It will therefore be apparent why I have slighted racial considerations, or followed them mainly with the object of showing that in few instances does a modern nationality represent a pure fragment of a race. The havoc which shreds of scientific discovery have wrought in modern international life is only second to the evil done at an earlier date by religious animosities. Switzerland and Belgium and the United States show that nationality may be entirely independent of race. A nationality is a group of people accepting a common political authority, and the fact that their fathers were already only remotely related in descent two thousand years ago does not of itself affect their co-operation. It is not their "blood," or any inherited impulses, which unite or separate men. It is a tradition, sharpened by years of warfare with other races, enhanced by memories of victory or made sombre by memories of defeat, and stamped by parent or pedagogue or politician on each new mind as it unfolds. At one

time the regional fragments of the English or the French "race" fought each other as ferociously as they afterwards fought "men of an alien race." Now they are "blood-brothers" in a common nationality.

In interpreting how this plastic racial material has been moulded into national types I have again kept in view, mainly, a few clear principles. One of the clearest is that isolation very largely explains the backwardness, and close cultural relation the advance, of different peoples. We had a very plain illustration of this in the case of the Slav, isolated for ages from the stimulating current of European life both by geographical position and religious diversity. In such conditions a despotism lives long and, in self-protection, guards the isolation severely when it is threatened. We have another application of the law in the case of Spain and Portugal. The first settlement on the inspiring ruins of the old Moorish civilisation, and the momentum of the zeal which overthrew it, led to the creation of a great prosperity and culture. Within a century or two the geographical isolation was felt, and barbaric ideas of persecution were evolved. The inroad of the French broke down the isolation, and Spain has never since returned to its old quiescent condition; but the isolation gave an advantage to the reactionaries, the progressive were expelled or put to death, and in the twentieth century Spain is actually discussing

whether it shall "Europeanise" its culture. These things are more illuminating than the German theory of "Moorish blood" in the veins of Spain. The backwardness of Ireland falls in part under the same law. The relative stagnation of China and India, the suspended development of the Maori, and a hundred other features of peoples are thus understood.

Conversely, an advance is generally traceable to cultural contact. The Greeks, "the most gifted race" in popular belief, were barbarians when they reached their familiar home. They first wrecked the civilisation they found there, and then were slowly stimulated to create another. Italy, Spain, Gaul, Britain, and Germany received and responded to the impulse—the external inspiration, not some mystic inner call—in succession. France and Austria were particularly well situated, and England neutralised its isolation (or abolished it) by a natural development of navigation. In our time isolation is becoming less and less possible, and we shall find all sorts of races advancing to civilisation. Most of the peoples of the world are now confronted with cultures superior to their own and they are slowly stirring. There are already full-blooded Africans of quite normal mind—I am personally acquainted with half a dozen who are expert and qualified in philosophy, engineering, or law—who are making a claim for their race. Even their less trained and less intelligent fellows are not much, if any, behind

the Teuton and his wife (as described, not by Tacitus, but by Ammianus Marcellinus) of fifteen hundred years ago.

But the law of isolation and contact is modified, as this question of the lower races reminds us, by other influences. They are, in cultural level, actually "lower" races, and their isolation during ages generally explains their backwardness. They are now less isolated, but in many cases an influence akin to that we found in the case of Turkey and Russia checks the natural effect of their contact with higher races. They have political or economic masters who are apt to suspect that a native development would put an end to their economic, if not to their political, supremacy. Our fine phrases about "the white man's burden" do at times conceal qualms of conscience. That consideration, however, would take me from my subject. We have already applied this principle of interpretation to some of the relatively backward peoples of Europe whose natural development was discouraged by priestly or secular rulers.

Economic conditions must next be applied in the interpretation of national groupings and national characters. When a horde of Huns falls bloodily upon a population of Slavs, we do not explain their contrasting features when we speak of the Hun as having remained in savagery, or as not belonging to the white race. Follow the Hun to his home on the nearer Asiatic steppes and study the conditions

of his life and diet, and the contrast of temperament becomes more intelligible. The Cossack is another instance. All men were originally hunters—and fighters. Primitive agriculture, as it spread, required or very naturally favoured a more settled and peaceful life. But primitive agriculture did not reach all, nor were all inhabited regions suited for it, and the races of long ago began to diverge in temper. In time—long before the historic period—commerce set in, and definite paths of civilisation were laid down. Then the more elaborate industries developed, and the advance of nations was profoundly influenced by their entirely fortuitous richness or poorness in metals and raw materials. With the increase of production, commerce extended ; and one may justly doubt whether there has been in history a more effective stimulant of civilisation than commerce.

Creeds and political forms, also, have had their share in shaping character. The cultural future of a nation, even of a group of nations, has more than once hung on the issue of a battle, which might introduce a new creed or a new polity. Nearly every page of this work has illustrated this agency in the formation of character. In Germany and in Serbia, in Russia and in Turkey, we have seen how the political creed imposed on a people has shaped their features or political pressure has distorted them. Nearly every nationality in Europe has been created, not by the deliberate adhesion of people

who felt themselves akin, but by an external force. And once the nationality is formed, and a general direction is given by its religious and secular rulers to the thoughts and habits of the people, there is gradually formed a collective standard or seal which is impressed on every new-comer. The Slav and the Teuton are not born, but made: or, to be accurate, the preponderating influence is that of the moral and mental environment into which they are born. I have, in the great elementary schools of the United States, watched earnest teachers stamping the American type on little Italians, Germans, Britains, Jews, and even negroes. The press would afterwards take up the work. In some cases I have seen the process completed in one generation.

The last term of all these environmental modifications of character is not obscure. Local variations are being obliterated age after age and the tendency is toward a general uniformity. Already there is a remarkable degree of similarity among the capitals of the world, and the metropolitan influence is spreading outwards into the provinces. Old national costumes disappear age by age, and in Europe they will before long be retained only as vain ornaments of the nurses of middle-class children in Paris and Berlin. With the costumes, old traditions and superstitions and habits are departing. Belgrade and Sofia and Bukarest are imitating Paris: in another generation the smaller towns of the Balkans will

adopt "metropolitan manners." Shades of character will undoubtedly linger. The French collective tradition or public mind or public taste will certainly long differ from the English, and will continue to create a character with different *nuances*. But intercommunication and mutual appreciation grow steadily, and, though there lies before us a mighty struggle within each social group on political, economic, and ethical differences, the tendency is to homogeneity. Herbert Spencer's famous formula of evolution is not true of human evolution. There will be at last *a soul of Europe, as soul of mankind.*

These, however, are remote considerations. If we apply our conclusions in regard to racial and national character to the present struggle, we come to certain interesting and useful conclusions. The struggle does not mean that certain eternal and unalterable racial principles have broken again into their inevitable conflict. We have seen that in every case where racial affinity or animosity is pleaded, an academic conclusion of scientific men has been hypocritically used by statesmen to justify actions which were really inspired by quite different motives. The patronage of Serbia by Russia is the nearest approach to a genuine expression of race-kinship, and we will regard it as a brotherly and disinterested act. But would Russia's intervention have taken place if it had not been preceded by a long tradition of intervention in the Balkans which was certainly *not* disinterested, and if the threatened

punishment of Serbia had not plainly portended a further extension of Austria and Germany over the Balkans? In all other respects, except the limited claim of Italy, the racial plea has completely broken down, and the most virulent hatred of modern times rages precisely between those two of the belligerent nations which are most closely related—England and Germany. The hollowness of all these racial cries is very plainly shown by the fact that Germany would now gladly make terms with “the barbaric Slav” in order to crush Teutonic England out of existence: and the Teutonic United States would witness the extinction of England more calmly than England would witness an attempt to annihilate France.

Nor can we admit that the war is a struggle of inferior and superior national characters. This is, perhaps, the supremely important conclusion that one deduces from the study of the European nations. The struggle has naturally engendered on both sides a crude popular psychology and ethic, and even scholars have at times written ingenious themes in support of the popular estimate. The machinery which has in the course of ages so beautifully adapted living things to their several environments has failed to evolve one structure or process of the greatest moment: it has not ensured in the nervous system of man that in time of crisis, when clear judgment is most needed, the mind shall rise serenely above the swirl of blinding emotions. We err in

one of two ways. A few, eager to save moral principles and fine emotions, refuse to consider the evidence for undeniable ugly facts and form a "pro-German" party. The majority brood over the facts until they shudder at the malignancy and utter immorality of their opponents. The bulk of the German nation are to-day entirely convinced that the English people have proved once more grossly immoral and inhuman: the bulk of the English people are conscious of having acted with complete propriety and are amazed at the corruption of their German opponents.

Since Europe hopes to resume its international life when this struggle is over, and to avoid a renewal of the carnage, it is wiser both to face the facts and seek to understand them. The facts about the war have been assumed rather than determined in this work. I have taken it as beyond serious controversy that Austria and Germany initiated the war, deliberately and after long premeditation and preparation: that the overwhelming mass of the people of those two nations fully approved the preparation for and initiation of the war by their rulers: that Austria and Germany have conducted the war with an unscrupulousness and inhumanity which have not characterised war in Europe since the close of the Middle Ages (or the Thirty Years' War): and that the mass of the people have again acquiesced in very many of these atrocities which were brought to their knowledge. I do not in the least share the

view that these atrocities should be regrettfully ignored in order that we may the more easily restore the peace of Europe at the close of the war. If I understand those who have controlled, and will continue to control, the policy of Germany, they would regard such an attitude as a heaven-sent piece of simplicity on our part, and would be all the more encouraged to prepare for a renewal, more corrupt than ever, of their design. Undoubtedly a lamentable element of most dangerous casuistry has got into the German people. One illustration may be added to those I have given. A distinguished German professor of international law has lately announced in the German press that, since reprisals are recognised in international law and the Allies form one legal personality for the moment, the German army and fleet are fully justified in inflicting injuries, beyond the usages of war, on French and English civilians because of the (alleged) acts of the Russians in East Prussia. I have seen a letter in which a Prussian officer describes these supposed outrages. He does not profess to have witnessed them, or quote any authority whatever for them.

In order to understand this immorality or inhumanity of peoples whom we have known for decades to be just as moral and humane as ourselves, I have, in the case of Germany and Austria, carefully analysed those economic and cultural developments which preceded the war. There is

always an element of moral luxury in condemning one's neighbours. For the practical purposes of life it is wise to understand as well as condemn, even if understanding lessens the fervour and richness of our anathema. The fundamental causes of the war were not moral, but political and economic. A strain of immoral impulse—of medieval covetousness and ambition—must be recognised in those who controlled the destinies of Austria, Turkey, and Germany, and they have, in the course of the war, organised lying and passion in a revolting manner. They have stripped war of the last pretence of chivalry, which at least mitigated its medieval horrors. They have made it a frankly brutal effort to secure ends which they proposed to themselves. But these impulses would not have arisen in force, or would not have won influence, in the twentieth century, if they had not been supported and consecrated by very substantial economic considerations. As for the mass of their people, we must judge them by the material on which they formed their own judgment. I have endeavoured to give a sufficient account of their studied education in crime.

It does not enter into the plan of this work to regard the settlement and the future, but the reader may welcome a few observations on that subject. The general principle of the settlement is probably much the same in the minds of all but a few extreme sentimentalists on either side : a few people whose generosity of sentiment is so high that they think it

possible to disarm William II with a Tolstoian homily, and a few who would deal with Germany on the medieval principles which they so much abominate in Germany itself. Both these "pacifists" and thirsters for vengeance would seriously compromise the further peace of the world if they were strong enough. For most people the principle of settlement is that the innocent injured shall be compensated and that Germany shall be prevented from repeating her aggressive campaign. The question of compensation for Belgium, Serbia, and Poland needs no discussion. Germany and Austria can and must pay so much. How much more they can pay will depend on the future of militarism in those lands. It would be a hazardous and probably unsuccessful experiment to attempt to impose on Germany complete and permanent disbandment until the full indemnity is paid, yet Europe has a clear title to dictate financial measures to those Powers.

The graver problem is to secure Europe against a repetition of the war, and of this many solutions are offered. One is to treat her with such generosity that she will recognise our goodwill and abandon aggressive designs : which, as I have said, seems to me a complete misunderstanding of the character of official Germany. After her recent conduct no promises or engagements can have our sincere reliance, and we have, on the basis of plain experience, to be on our guard against intrigue,

cunning, and duplicity. Utopian ideas of a revolution of disillusioned workers against the Hohenzollern, or of a sudden change of heart at the spectacle of British disinterestedness, are usually put forward by men who do not furnish any evidence of having studied Germany. We have to do one of two things, if we are not prepared to trust Germany's signature to a treaty, as no informed person could do. We have either to insist on an abandonment of militarism and the payment of a full indemnity, which will involve the military occupation and profound embitterment of Germany for years : or else we have to detach such provinces from Austria and Germany as to reduce their actual strength materially below that of the Allies. Since Germany will probably prove as cunning in organising passive resistance as she has proved in organising war, the first expedient is not attractive.

In carrying out the second expedient the Allies will leave Germany no legitimate ground for complaint. We shall be dealing with them by the measure that they would have used in dealing with us. But the measure may be justly used by us for two reasons : the partition is required for the peace of Europe, and the detached provinces will be removed on precisely the same ground as that on which they were acquired. What the actual reconstruction of the map of Europe may be, it is not very profitable to conjecture. It is reasonable to suppose that the draught is already prepared. The

notion that the victorious Powers will meet round a table, with representatives of the Papacy and the United States intriguing for admission, and begin to draw lines on a virgin page, seems to me particularly unreal. England, France, and Russia probably know precisely (apart from small delimitations of frontier) what they are going to do, and what compensation they must give to the Powers which remained neutral or may yet join in the struggle. We have had sufficient intimations that a strenuous diplomatic war is taking place ; and Russia and France have already openly declared that they are going to restore Poland and recover Alsace and Lorraine.

It is therefore superfluous to offer an ideal scheme of rearrangement and foolish to attempt a detailed forecast. Alsace and Lorraine will return to France. I have previously observed and explained that for France to institute a plebiscite among the inhabitants would be a very hazardous experiment, and would probably leave Germany in possession of the whole of that very menacing region, except the district of Metz. In the circumstances it is difficult to imagine France offering, or England urging, a plebiscite. The provinces are overwhelmingly German, but they were quite contented under French rule for two centuries and will, if German intrigue be excluded, probably be contented once more. The ideal solution would be, after slightly extending the French frontier, to make the whole

Germanic district west of the Rhine (including Luxemburg) an autonomous State, with every fortress razed and every strategic railway destroyed. It would be a noble act of the French to consent to that solution, but there is probably no nation in Europe, or America, that would thus withhold its hand when its ancient provinces come within its grasp. There is every reason to believe that Alsace and Lorraine will be happy under France.

Posen will assuredly be taken by Russia and, with Galicia, be aggregated to the new Kingdom of Poland. Here again a plebiscite would be hazardous, because the Austrians have been generous to the Poles of Galicia, and all Poles have learned to distrust Russia. So Russia will act, and we must trust that it will sustain its honour afterwards. The sentiment that bodies of people shall not be transferred without their will and consent is admirable, but Russia and France will be apt to ask why this self-sacrificing policy was kept in reserve for them. They might suggest that we take a plebiscite in South Africa and other colonies, the United States in the Philippines, and so on. In any case, we have to consider the general European situation. Unless the resources of Germany are thus reduced, how can we restrain it from meditating revenge? I have not seen a single practical or definite suggestion on the part of the people who ask us not to humiliate Germany and not to transfer provinces without consulting the inhabitants.

It is possible that Russia will also detach Prussia, and as East Prussia is even more German than West Prussia, this would be a grave provocation. As Russia will undoubtedly consult only its own strategic interest, we may wait and see. Since the loss of Poland and Alsace-Lorraine would reduce the German population by four millions only, there is something to be said for the alienation of Prussia. There would then be a broad tract of neutral territory, without strategic railways, on either side of Germany. This, and the reduction of her normal population by war-losses, and the immense drain of her resources by war-expenditure and indemnity, should, if Russia prove faithful, give us some guarantee of peace. It is difficult to conceive any other guarantee.

Austria will, I take it, lose also the Bukovina (to Rumania) and the whole of her Slav provinces south of the Danube. This would prevent her from counting again as a first-class Power or military danger in Europe, and the transfer would be entirely just. I apprehend that the monarchy would still hold together in the interest of its chief constituent elements—Austria, Hungary, and Bohemia. South of Trieste, or wherever Italy ends, the Adriatic coast ought to be divided between Serbo-Croatia (assuming that the detached Slav provinces join Serbia, on which, since she has not conquered them, a plebiscite might fitly be taken), Montenegro, and Albania. Constantinople I should prefer to see

still Turkish, with a complete disarmament of the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus. Mr. Toynbee and every other speculator in this region are unjust to the Turks as a nation. Here at least it is proposed to make a people pay very heavily for the sins of a few. But I shrink from anything more than general outlines. The victorious Powers will ignore all the amateur draughtsmen of Europe.

Nor does it seem probable that their Conference will assume the larger complexion and have the larger issues which many expect. The representatives of the Powers will have a sufficiently large problem without ranging over Europe from Schleswig to Armenia. They are not likely to discuss the methods of diplomacy or to agree to a limitation of armaments. If they secure from each other guarantees of just treatment of subjects and of economic facilities they will recognise that these are particularly the kind of guarantees which come under the German definition of treaties. The soul of Europe may look forward to, not a period of profound peace, but a period of grave dangers, when the war is over. The very natural storm of rejoicing in the victorious nations, and of anger and humiliation in the fallen nations, will obscure the memory of recent horrors and reconcile men to militarism. And there is no guarantee against war while the military system lasts. Germany will apply all her vast energy, doggedness, and ability to the work of recovery, and Russia will be discouraged by

the impatience and the extravagances which will arise out of her very concessions. The internal political and economic struggle, which is only beginning in Europe, will further complicate the situation. Only through long and painful travail will the soul of Europe yet come to birth. And if her peoples persist in their narrower patriotisms and racial shibboleths, their disinclination for serious thought and intense absorption in frivolities, they will remain the victims of the political or military adventurer, and more rivers of blood will yet foul the chronicle of modern civilisation.

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